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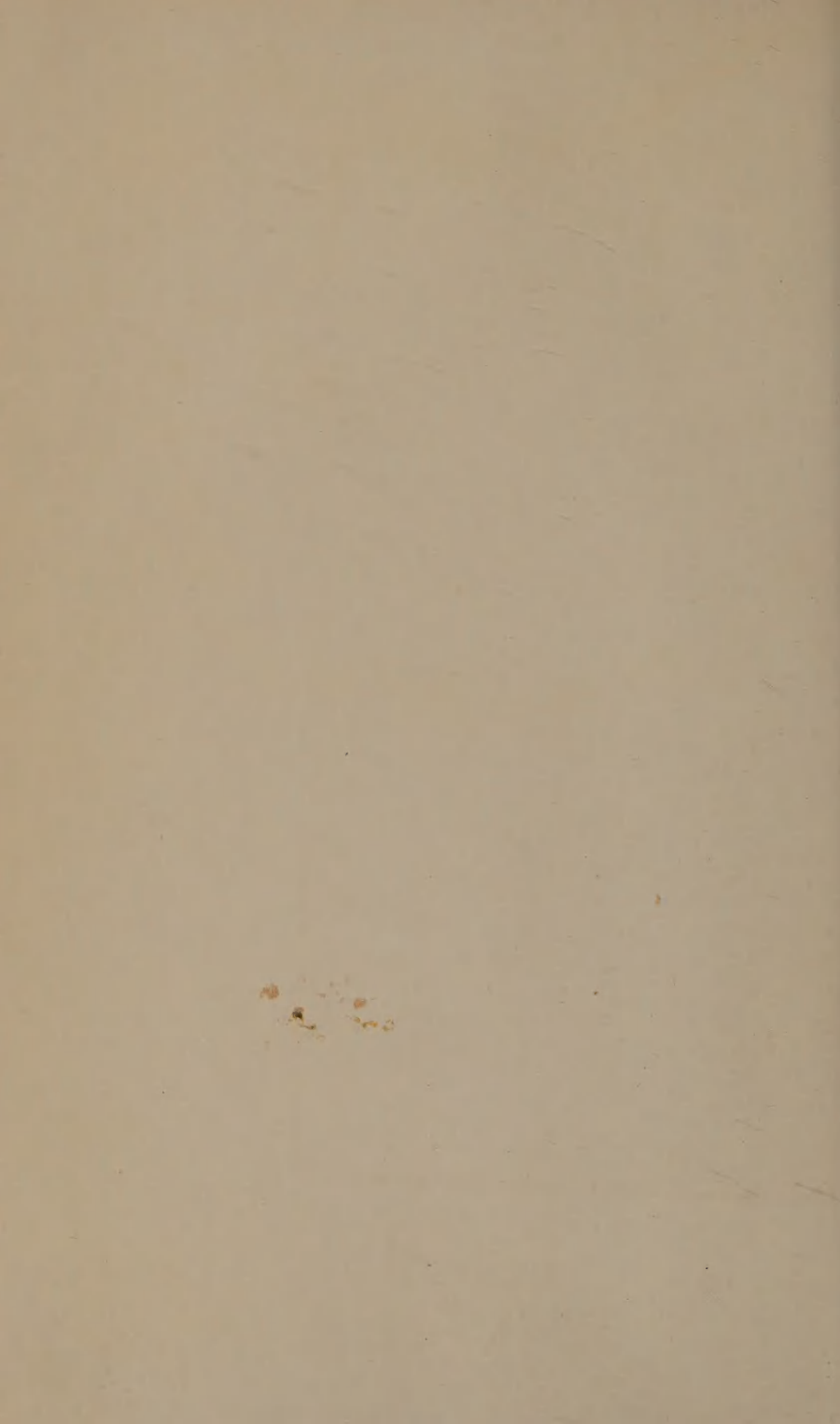












# ANCIENT CHRISTIANITY

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1856

## EXEMPLIFIED

IN THE

PRIVATE, DOMESTIC, SOCIAL, AND CIVIL LIFE

OF THE

### Primitive Christians,

AND IN THE ORIGINAL

INSTITUTIONS, OFFICES, ORDINANCES, AND  
RITES OF THE CHURCH.

---

BY LYMAN COLEMAN.

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PHILADELPHIA:  
J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.

1856.

ANCIENT CHRISTIANITY

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PRIVATE, DOMESTIC, SOCIAL AND CIVIL LIFE

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Primitive Christians

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RITES OF THE CHURCH

BY LYMAN COLEMAN

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PHILADELPHIA:

J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.

1852



## PREFACE.

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SEVERAL years have elapsed since the author of this manual published his *Antiquities of the Christian Church*, as a translation and compilation from Augusti and other sources. Certain circumstances incidental to that publication, which need not be detailed in this place, directed the writer to new and more extensive investigations upon the whole subject of the constitution, discipline, worship, and rites of the ancient church. The results of these inquiries have been, in part, given to the public in another form.\*

The interest thus incidentally awakened in this branch of ecclesiastical history directed the writer to continue with renewed diligence the study of the archæology of the church. In the course of these studies, the original compilation on the antiquities of the church has been entirely remodelled, to a great extent rewritten, and repeatedly revised, with additions and omissions, until it has assumed the character of an independent work, rather than the form of a reprint of the former edition.

The archæology of the church is introduced by a brief view of the religious character of the primitive Christians

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\* The Apostolical and Primitive Church, Popular in its Government and Simple in its Worship.

in private, and in their domestic, social, and civil relations; their religious character being a just exponent of their ecclesiastical institutions, customs, and rites. The works of Arnold, Cave, Fleury, Bingham, and many other writers, together with the *Denkwürdigkeiten*, the *Monographs*, and the *History of Neander*, afford ample materials for such a sketch; but to select and group in distinct outlines and just proportions is a task of peculiar difficulty. Without attempting a full portraiture, we have sought to trace a few original lineaments, leaving the reader to fill out the picture by the light and shade which his own reading may supply.

Several subjects which are discussed at length in the *Primitive Church* are treated more briefly in this volume, and dismissed with references to that work, that more space might be reserved for other topics.

The most important sources from which this compilation has been made have been indicated in the introduction; besides these, reference has been had to many other works, ancient and modern, which cannot be conveniently enumerated. But among these the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, published at Andover, deserves a distinct acknowledgment, which in its rich and varied range of articles, original and select, has not omitted the subject of Christian archæology. The author's task has been chiefly to select, arrange, translate, combine, and compress within suitable limits his materials, from whatever source derived.

A distinction of dates has been observed throughout as far as possible, and the successive stages of the transition from the primitive to the prelatical organization of the church have been carefully noted, with the causes which occasioned this early and disastrous transition. Such data



have been frequently recorded, at the hazard of occasional repetitions. At the same time, such expressions as "the apostolical," "the early," "the ancient church," "primitive Christians," &c., have been unavoidably used, chiefly with reference to the first three centuries of the early Christian era. When not formally stated, the dates are frequently indicated by the references made to authors and councils; among which constant care has been used to refer to the earliest and most authentic, in support and explanation of the facts and conclusions adduced. To make this kind of reference the more available, an alphabetical table of ancient councils and a chronological index are appended to this manual.

The Plan of Churches and the Chronological Index are from Rheinwald. The reader will find in the latter a valuable compend of the historical events connected with the antiquities of the church, in which the successive stages of departure from the simplicity and purity of primitive worship are distinctly stated in connection with the contemporary authors and rulers in church and state, who were instrumental either in introducing or opposing these innovations.

The account of the religious rites of the Armenian church, from Rev. H. G. O. Dwight, missionary at Constantinople, cannot fail to interest the Christian reader, while it reveals to him, through the dimness of a high antiquity, the customs of the primitive church.

For the same reasons, the sketch of the Nestorian church is invested with a similar interest. This is from the hands of the Rev. J. Perkins, a missionary of the A. B. C. F. M. to the Nestorians, and author of *Residence in Persia among the Nestorians*.

The chapter on the Sacred Seasons of the Puritans sup-



plies an obvious deficiency in the history of our forefathers, and will, no doubt, be received as a valuable addition to this work, and an important contribution from a distinguished antiquary to our own ecclesiastical history.

This work was undertaken in the hope that it would, in some measure, supply a great deficiency in our ecclesiastical literature, and serve to direct the attention of the public to this neglected branch of study. Many topics of great interest, relating to the rites, institutions, and authority of the ancient church, are now the subject of earnest controversy in England and of eager inquiry in this country. Ancient Christianity is destined, in both countries, to be severely scrutinized anew, and its merits sharply contested. This consideration presents one reason among many for offering this publication, at the present time, to the service of the public.

The views of an ancient edifice vary with every change of position on the part of the observer. Each point of observation brings out on the foreground, in bold relief, one pinnacle, and sinks and shades another: so an author's point of observation shades and groups his portraiture of the ancient church. Our stand-point is that of a decided dissenter from the dogmas and doctrines of episcopacy and prelacy respecting the government, worship, discipline, and usages of the apostolical and primitive churches. It is essentially that of Planck, of Augusti, of Neander, of Böhrmer, and generally of the German archæologists, from whose works this manual has been chiefly compiled. Bingham's great work, invaluable as an auxiliary, has been freely consulted; but his point of observation directly reverses the foreground of the picture sketched by those great masters which we have sought to transfer to these pages.

Conscious of having laboured diligently to prepare a compend of this interesting branch of the history of the church, that shall be at once acceptable and useful in disclosing the sources from which the venerable institutions of our religion are derived, and in delineating the virtues of those holy men from whom they have been transmitted to us, we now commit it again, with all its deficiencies, to the charitable consideration of the public, and await in submission the result of their decision.

PHILADELPHIA, *August*, 1852.





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## INTRODUCTION.

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A FAITHFUL record of the doctrines, the institutions and rituals of the Church, is its true history. These, and not merely or chiefly its conflicts, its trials, and its triumphs, disclose the true genius and spirit of Christianity. But the study of these two great branches of Christian Archæology, the history of its ceremonials and of its doctrines, indispensable to all who would rightly read the history of the ancient church, has been almost totally neglected in this country. Neither of them, we believe, is made a separate and distinct subject of study in any of our theological seminaries; nor has a single course of lectures on either of these topics, so far as the writer is informed, ever been delivered by any public lecturer or professor of ecclesiastical history in our land.

This neglect presents our course of theological study in humiliating contrast with that of the European nations, particularly the Germans. In their universities, no course of theological instruction is complete without an independent and extended series of lectures on the history both of the doctrines, and of the polity and rites of the ancient church.

Neander has evinced his sense of the importance of these studies by the space devoted to them in his immortal work. But in connection with his public lectures on ecclesiastical history, he was accustomed uniformly to deliver a parallel course, equally full and extensive, on the Antiquities of the Church. Both were, in his estimation, equally important, as essential and independent parts of the History of the Church. Moreover, the rapidity with which works of this character are thrown off from the German press, the wide and extensive range of topics which they comprehend, indicate the importance which this branch of ecclesiastical history, by us so generally neglected, has assumed in that country.

And yet the rites and forms of the ancient church have, to the American churches, an interest and importance unknown to those to whom we are chiefly indebted for information respecting the early institutions of the Christian church. However discord-

ant in sentiment the Lutheran churches may be, they are harmonious in their government and rites of worship. The learned of their communion carefully scrutinize the ancient church, not to justify or defend their own ecclesiastical usages, about which they have no controversy, but as the means of discerning the real character of primitive Christianity. The moral habits of a man are a practical exemplification of his religious principles; so the social habits of a church, its government, and ritual, are a living expression of the religious spirit of the age. A knowledge of these is indispensable for a right understanding of church history; but to the American churches it has an importance far greater, with reference to the great controversy in which they are engaged respecting rites and forms. In this controversy, Formalism and Puritanism are the great antagonistic principles; the one striving for a sensuous, the other for a spiritual religion. In the former, as in the Old Testament, religion is estimated by outward forms, and piety promoted by external forms; in the latter, as in the New Testament, every thing is made to depend upon what is internal and spiritual. The one found its just expression in the freedom, simplicity, and spirituality of the apostolic and primitive churches; the other was embodied in the ancient hierarchy which early supplanted the foundations laid by the apostles and their immediate successors, and still discovers itself in the ceremonies and assumptions of high church prelacy, Puseyism, and Popery.

These two opposite schemes of religion the Tractarians of Oxford denominate the Genevan and the Catholic. They boldly avow that these schemes are now, probably for the last time, struggling together, and that on this struggle hangs the destiny of the Church of England. But the conflict is not confined to the Church of England. It has passed over to our American churches. It summons them to begin anew the great controversy of the Reformation. This was, at the beginning as now, a controversy not so much respecting *doctrines* as about *forms* and *traditions*. Melancthon and the reformers earnestly maintained that their controversy was not "respecting the doctrines of the church, but concerning certain abuses which, without due authority, had crept in." The Augsburg Confession renews the affirmation "that the division and the strife was respecting certain traditions and abuses;" and to the same effect is the Helvetian Confession, and that of Smalcald.

With this controversy in the Reformation began the study of the Antiquities of the Church as an independent branch of church history. The contending parties both appealed to the authority

of the fathers, and the usages of the primitive and apostolical churches. This appeal led each to renew his researches in the records of the past; to arrange, digest, and construct his authorities in defence of his position. From the scattered materials which were collected, the historians of the church, on either side, soon began to construct their antagonist histories of the church—of its doctrines, its polity, and its worship. The chaotic elements of the ancient fathers, apologists, and historians of the church, *rudis indigestaque moles*, began now to be arranged, compared, and constructed into opposing systems, deduced from opposite views of the primitive formation.

A brief historical sketch of the rise and progress of this department of Ecclesiastical History may therefore serve as an appropriate Introduction to the following work; in preparing which the author, by permission, has availed himself chiefly of an article originally prepared for another place.\*

The Magdeburg Centuriators, in the sixteenth century, led the way in this new science of ecclesiastical history, from which that of Christian Antiquities has since become a distinct department. These illustrious and laborious compilers published, from 1559 to 1574, thirteen folio volumes, each comprising a century. Their object was to show that the Protestant doctrine respecting the church was the doctrine of the ancient Catholic church, as might appear from its history, recorded and traditional; and that the

\* The Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review, Jan., 1852, No. I. Article I. Antiquities of the Christian Church.

1. Denkwürdigkeiten aus der Christlichen Archæologie. Bde. I.–XII. 8vo. Leipzig, 1817–31. Von D. Johann Christian Wilhelm Augusti.

2. K. Schöne's Geschichtsforschungen über die Kirchlichen Gebräuche und Einrichtungen den Christen, ihren Ausbildung und Veränderungen. Th. I.–III. Berlin, 1821–22.

3. Die Kirchliche Archæologie. Dargestellt von F. H. Rheinwald. 8vo. S. 569. Berlin, 1830.

4. Handbuch der Christlichen Archæologie. Bde. I.–III. Leipzig, 1836 7. Von D. Johann Christian Wilhelm Augusti.

5. Handbuch der Christlich-kirchlichen Alterthümer in alphabetischer ordnung mit steter Beziehung auf das, was davon noch jetzt im christlichen Cultus übrig geblieben ist. Von M. Carl Christian Friedrich Siegel. Bde. I.–IV. Leipzig, 1835–38.

6. Lehrbuch der Christlich-kirchlichen Archæologie. Verfasst von Dr. Joh. Nep. Locherer. 8vo. S. 194. Frankfurt am Main, 1832.

7. Die Christlich-kirchliche Alterthumswissenschaft, theologischeritisch bearbeitet. Von Dr. Wilhelm Böhrer. Bde I.–II. 8vo. Breslau, 1836–9.

8. Lehrbuch der Christlich-kirchlichen Archæologie. Von Heinrich Ernst Ferdinand Guericke. 8vo. S. 345. Leipzig, 1847.

doctrine of the modern Catholic church was the result of traditional errors and corruptions which had crept into that communion by degrees, until it had grossly departed from the primitive standard, in faith and practice. With this intent they treated largely of rites and ceremonies, the constitution and government of the church, devoting two chapters in each century to these topics.

In opposition to the Magdeburg Centuriators, thirty years later, Cæsar Baronius, subsequently Cardinal at Rome, published his Ecclesiastical Annals, in twelve folio volumes, exhibiting the Romish doctrine on the same subjects. So largely did Baronius treat of the rites and government of the church, that Schulting, one of his epitomists, describes his work as containing a thesaurus of sacred antiquities.

The example of these illustrious predecessors was followed by subsequent historians and polemics, through the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. Controverted topics controlled both their investigations and their narrations of the results of them. The whole history of the church, and especially that of the usages and rites of the church, was examined and re-examined, collated and discussed, to make it speak in favour of the Protestant or Catholic confession, according to the faith of the writers respectively. For a century and a half the parties continually pitched over against each other, like two hostile encampments, intrenched, on the one hand, behind the bulwark of the Magdeburg Centuries; on the other, behind the Annals of Baronius. Both claimed to be orthodox, both defended themselves on the authority of history, both repaired to it as their common armory from which to draw the weapons of their warfare in defence of their respective confessions. The period now under consideration is the age of those enormous folios which crowd the shelves of our public libraries, and in the production of which, Protestants of Germany, France, and England vied with the Benedictine monks in publishing, illustrating, and commenting upon the works of the fathers, and the synodical decrees and councils of the church. Among the former may be named Blondell, Salmasius, Usher, Cave, Dodwell, Arnold, Basnage, Mosheim, Lardner, Walch, Venema, Schröckh, &c. Of the latter were Tillemont, Mabillon, Du Pin, Natalis Alexander, Montfaucon, &c.

But it was reserved for Mosheim, the renowned historian of Göttingen, to free Church History from the partialities and prejudices of partisan zeal, and elevate it to the rank of an independent science. Orthodox himself, and profoundly learned, he had the magnanimity, how rare! to be just to opposite systems of religious



faith—to combine, and group, and throw upon the canvas the living forms of every faith, in their just proportion and natural lineaments. He gathered his materials from the widest range of research, and yet presided as a master over the vast incongruous mass which he had collected. Like a skilful naturalist, with consummate ability he reduced the crude elements, conformable and nonconformable, into an organic, consistent whole. Thus from authentic records he wrote out the true history of the church, as the modern geologist from the book of Nature gives us the history of the earth, with the order and relative age of the several strata, from the earliest to the latest formation; with the causes that produced them, age after age. These powers of research, of combination, of generalization, coupled with religious earnestness, a keen insight into the characters of men, precision and fluency of style, have won for Mosheim the honoured title of the Father of modern Church History—the founder at once of the science of ecclesiastical history, and the art of composing it.

One of Mosheim's most valuable works was his *Historical Commentaries* on the state of Christianity during the first 320 years from the Christian era; of which a translation has recently been published by Dr. Murdoch, translator of Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical History*. These *Commentaries* treat of the organization and government of the primitive church; the change from the popular to the prelatical form, and many of the topics which appropriately belong to the department of Christian Antiquities. In this way they had an important influence in enriching this department of ecclesiastical research. Previous to this period, several imperfect and partial treatises had been published on the continent, by both Protestant and Roman Catholic writers, who wrote, in the spirit of the age, for partisan purposes. These works, however, were limited in their plan, and greatly deficient in their execution, detailing chiefly the rites and usages of the Christian church. The most of these soon passed into deserved neglect, and now are found only in the accumulated rubbish of the public libraries of Europe.

It is a curious fact that the English language has produced but two authors of any celebrity on this subject; though the controversy respecting the original organization of the church and the ritual of its worship has been longer continued, and perhaps more firmly contested, in this language than in any other. Dr. William Cave, in 1673, published his *Primitive Christianity, or the Religion of the Ancient Church in the first Ages of the Gospel*. This was soon followed by his *Apostolical Antiquities, and History of the*

Primitive Fathers. The first mentioned was translated into the French language, and has passed through many editions, of which the latest was published in 1840, at Oxford. In this, as in all his works, it is his endeavour to exhibit the religious character of the primitive churches for the imitation of his readers. In doing this, he indirectly describes many of the rites and customs of the primitive Christians, but omits, as foreign to his purpose, much more which appropriately belongs to the department of antiquities. He writes with an indulgent charity, which forms a flattering estimate of primitive piety, and fails to notice any visible decline until the third or fourth century.

The only great work which has been produced in our language on Christian Antiquities, is that of Joseph Bingham, published between 1708 and 1722. *Opus viginti annorum, monumentum aere perennius* of the vast research and tireless industry of the author. This work has been several times abridged, and the early abridgments have been translated into different languages. The original has gone through many editions; the latest in London, 1850. It is a standard work with the advocates of prelacy; and to all, a vast and valuable repository of argument and authorities on a wide range of topics connected with the usages and ecclesiastical polity of the ancient church. But with all its merits, it has great deficiencies. It lacks clearness, and it omits altogether several important topics of discussion. The author is not master of his materials. He has accumulated them by indefatigable research, until they have become a vast, unwieldy mass, thrown together without due discrimination or order. He seldom chronologizes his authorities; so that what one may have gathered from him as authentic and of high antiquity, for some ancient usage, may on examination prove to be only the spurious production of a later age, and accordingly of no value.

Above all, the work lacks candour and impartiality. The author is a zealous advocate of high-church principles, which, to a great extent, he discovers in the primitive church, and which he asserts and defends from its history. Other foundation for the Church of Christ he finds not, either in its ancient history, or in the authority of the apostles. Of a form of government, earlier, more simple, and more popular than prelacy, he knows nothing. In the essential characteristics of the order and worship of the church he discovers no material change in the whole course of its history, save the more modern corruptions of Romanism, which he sometimes detects and exposes with great earnestness. But the true theory



of the apostolical churches—of that primeval and normal form of the church, given by the apostles and their immediate successors, in the judgment even of moderate Churchmen, and much more, in that of Presbyterians and Independents, as a model of the church in all ages—is not to be learned from Bingham. In place of it, he has substituted the distortions and perversions of the hierarchy as the primitive forms of Christianity.

In the defence of the true theory of a free popular church government, we are compelled to turn for aid from the land of enlightened freedom, to the more learned, liberal, and enlightened scholars, reared under the despotisms of Germany. To that country, where the storm of strife is laid—where the controversy between the two opposing systems, Protestant and Catholic, has settled down into a dissent without discord; to the ecclesiastical literature of that country chiefly must the dissenting churches of England and America repair for armour, in defence of the principles of the Reformation, to which they are again summoned by the assumptions and aggressions of high church prelacy. In our churches, the great controversy of the age—under a modified form, the same as that of the Reformation—is with the spirit of formalism. Formalism was then, as now, the great antagonist principle in the warfare; and still the learned men of the country where the Reformation began, though now retired from the conflict, are our chief reliance for aid and counsel, and for armour.

Foremost among modern writers on this branch of ecclesiastical polity, stands the honoured name of Planck of Gottingen, who has written at length, and with great ability, upon one of the most difficult subjects connected with that of the antiquities of the church. He writes with a firm belief in the miraculous nature of true religion, and a profound veneration for Christianity. His services in this department of Church History are clearly expressed by one of the most competent writers of Germany, Dr. Hagenbach:

“It had become necessary to connect the past with the present, to illuminate the facts of history with the torch of philosophy, or rather with the opinions in vogue among the majority of educated people. It was no longer enough to know what had come to pass in earlier times; even the critical separation of what was duly attested from what belonged to the region of myths and conjecture, appeared to be only a preliminary work. Men wished now also to know *how* things had come to pass, and why they had come *thus* and not otherwise. As at the same epoch the investigations in the sphere of nature were prosecuted teleologically, inquiring

after the cause, and effect, and final causes, so in the sphere of moral freedom in which history moves, similar connections and relations of events were sought out. But this could not be done without applying to the events some *moral* standard, and inquiring after the internal motives from which, in given relations, the actions had proceeded. They also endeavoured to understand what had occurred, partly as a result of human impulse or calculation, and partly from the concatenation of wonderfully coincident circumstances. This is the *pragmatic* treatment of history, as the English Gibbon, Hume, and Robertson had written it, before the Germans made it theirs. Planck applied it to Church History; and there are especially two works of his in which this historical method is carried out in a masterly manner. The one, "The History of the Origin and Formation of the Christian Ecclesiastical Constitutions," had for its object to describe that most difficult point, the history of the external organization of the Christian church. The earlier orthodox Protestantism had been accustomed to regard the huge edifice of the mediæval hierarchy with the greatest abhorrence, as the cast-down bulwark of Antichrist; but the time had now come in which the human mind felt itself challenged to draw near to the ruins of this overgrown greatness, and ask how and by what means did it become what it was; how could such a gigantic edifice grow up from its slight and unnoticeable beginnings? It was just this question which Planck sought to answer; although he starts with assumptions about the nature of the church, which are rather derived from the external circumstances of its origin than from that spiritual might hidden within it, which not only waits upon, but is superior to its external manifestation."\*

Neander's *Memorabilia*, with his monographs of Chrysostom and Tertullian, to say nothing of that of Julian, compiled from ancient records of Christians and of Christian life, afford us important aid in this department of archæological investigations. Pictures of Christian men and women, fresh and warm with life, with pictorial scenes of their religious character, of the state of society in which they lived, and of the religious constitutions which were established or modified by them, are sketched in these works in the bold and truthful outline of a master.

In connection with this work stands Neander's *History of the First Planting of the Christian Church*. From the life and times of the primitive saints, and their influence in modifying the insti-

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\* Translated by Prof. H. B. Smith, Bib. Sac. Oct., 1851.

tutions of the church, he here ascends to the original authors of these institutions, and gives us a living knowledge of the very soul of Peter, of John, of James, and, above all, of the grand peculiarities of Paul, together with a vivid sketch of that primitive, normal pattern which they gave of the organization of the church, for the imitation of believers in all coming time.

In the same connection should also be mentioned Rothe's *Elements of the Christian Church*, a work of the same general design, the production of an independent, original mind, and of a rare scholar. Taking his departure from a different point of observation, the author seeks to trace from the apostles the genetic development of the church. Though himself a devout man, his writings are deeply tinged with the bold, fanciful theories of a different school.

We have dwelt so long upon these preliminary works and collateral aids to the study of Christian Antiquities, that we must dismiss, with a brief notice, the several independent, modern writers on this subject, whose works have appeared within the last thirty years.

First in the order of time and in magnitude, if not in importance, stands Augusti's *Memorabilia* from Christian Archæology, published at Leipsic, in twelve volumes, between the years 1817 and 1831. The title is ill chosen, and poorly indicates the nature and extent of the author's labours. At the distance of a hundred years from Bingham, he takes up anew the work of this compiler, and collects from original sources an immense mass of authorities on almost all the wide range that belongs to the department of Christian Archæology. These he incorporates in his pages, instead of inserting them, like Bingham, in foot notes at the bottom; and he usually contents himself with the original without translation, connecting them together into a continuous treatise, by his own course of remarks. He is calm, dispassionate, and free from partisan zeal, even to indifference in his discussions, which are often prolix, crude, and immethodical. Like Bingham, Augusti is chargeable with unpardonable negligence in omitting almost all chronological data. The work, however, is, with all its defects, one of great value. It is a vast storehouse of authorities, collected with great industry and extensive research, from the whole range of ancient historians, apologists, and councils, relating to almost every branch of Christian Antiquities. To one who has not opportunities and time for equal original research, as few have in any country, and none in this, the *Memorabilia* of Augusti are invaluable, offering at hand materials for use in argument and illustration.

In the years of 1836 and 1837, Augusti published an abridgment of his original work in three volumes, averaging more than seven hundred pages each, under the title of a Hand-book of Christian Archæology. In this, his materials are better wrought; the plan and order are entirely changed. The authorities are carefully sifted; needless redundances are pruned off, and every part of the work bears evidence of a thorough revision. The whole has a fairer symmetry and a higher finish, and is, for all ordinary use, much more valuable than the original work. Augusti was Professor, first of Oriental Literature, then of Theology, and was connected successively with the Universities at Breslau, Jena, and Bonn; and toward the close of life, was Counsellor and Director of the Consistory at Coblenz. He was the honoured associate of De Wette in the translation of the Bible, and the author of many works on literary, historical, and theological subjects.

The works of Augusti were followed in quick succession by others in the same department, of various interest and importance, and more or less extensive in volume and in the range of their inquiries. K. Schöne published at Berlin, 1821, '22, in three volumes, his Historical Researches in the Ecclesiastical Usages and Institutions of Christians, their Increase, Improvement, and Changes. Though neither original nor profound, it is a useful treatise on the *rituals* of the church. On these topics he gives a large induction of authorities in a translation, without the original, and omitting in many instances all reference to them.

Rheinwald's Ecclesiastical Archæology is the next in order. This, though compressed into a single octavo, is far more comprehensive than the former in its plan, and is a production of a higher order. It is written with studied brevity, and exhibits a wonderful power of compression, scarcely surpassed by De Wette's Exegetical Hand-book, or Gieseler's Text Book of Church History. It is constructed on the plan of the latter, in which the author makes his own statement a mere thread on which to hang the choicest gems which boundless research has gathered from the hidden recesses of antiquity, to enrich the literature of his subject. The choice extracts which adorn his pages, selected, wrought, and arranged with the skill of a master, conduct us directly to the most valuable, original authors, and introduce them to speak for themselves. As Gieseler's admirable work remains still unrivalled in ecclesiastical history, so does Rheinwald's as a hand-book in ecclesiastical archæology.

Siegel's Hand-book of Christian Ecclesiastical History soon fol



lowed Rheinwald's. The writer is a preacher in the Cathedral Church of St. Thomas, in Leipsic, and lecturer in the University in that city. He proposes to himself the task, not of an original investigator, but of a compiler, to collect together the materials which are scattered through many volumes of different authors; to combine and reconstruct a complete treatise on each of the several topics of the antiquities of the Christian Church, with constant reference to the modified forms in which ancient usages and institutions are still retained in different communions of the Christian Church. These treatises are arranged in alphabetical order for convenient reference. The expediency of this arrangement, however, is questionable. It sunders that *quoddam commune vinculum* which pertains to kindred topics of the same general subject, and fails to give the reader a connected symmetrical view of the whole. This inconvenience the author attempts to remedy by a synoptical view, or summary of a connected treatise, with references to the articles which would thus stand connected in a synthetical arrangement. A copious and valuable register of technical terms, both Greek and Latin, occurring in ancient authors and archæological works of this nature, is also appended.

The author appropriates to his use very freely the labours of his learned predecessors, frequently incorporating at length into his work their authorities and discussions, either with or without abridgment, at his pleasure, and generally without any just acknowledgment. The book contains a large amount of information concerning the rites, ceremonies, and constitution of the church, both ancient and modern, and much that is of great interest to the classical student. But the tone and manner in which he treats many important passages of sacred history indicates a rationalistic tendency, against which the reader should be duly guarded.

The little work of Locherer next claims a passing notice, as a concise and candid statement of the Roman Catholic view of the archæology of the Christian Church.

Professor Böhmer, of the University at Breslau, presents us with a work of a far higher order than either of the foregoing. It is the production of an original and independent mind, enriched with the learning, literary and historical, requisite for his task. His learning is chastened by a devout, religious spirit, and his researches are ever guided by a profound sense of the divine origin of the Christian religion. Böhmer belongs to the school of Planck and Neander, the latter of whom was accustomed to speak of him in conversation with the writer, in terms of the highest respect.



It is truly to be regretted that a work of such merit is not presented in a style more clear and attractive, a defect of which Neander made severe complaint, and of which a foreigner must be more keenly sensible. But whatever deficiencies the work may have, it is undoubtedly, in many respects, the ablest, the most reliable, and the best extant on the archæology of the Christian church.

After the illustrious examples of Planck and Neander, Böhmer applies throughout the *pragmatic mode* of historical research to the elucidation of his subject; always bearing in mind that an earnest religious spirit imparted from on high, first fashioned the outward organization of the church, and that no historical investigations of his subject can be safe or satisfactory which overlook the religious spirit of the age, and the internal causes which affect the outward ordinances and institutions of the church. With this religious, *pragmatic* view of the subject, which Augusti and Siegel disregard, and Rheinwald avowedly despises as worthy only of a "literary charlatan," Böhmer often subjects the writings of his predecessors to a searching and severe criticism, and establishes a separate independent judgment. His work is, indeed, to a great extent, a learned and severe critique on preceding works in the same department. It might with propriety be denominated a pragmatic review of modern German authors on Christian Archæology.\*

He announces, as his subject, the Science of Christian Ecclesiastical Antiquities, theologically and critically discussed. This mode of discussion and the qualifications requisite for it are set forth in the following extract from the preface of his first volume: "The researches of one, however learned, who contemplates the Christian church only from without, and deduces its institutions and rites from external relations and circumstances, and other forms of religion, are wholly unsatisfactory. Such a one overlooks the fact that the Divine Spirit which the exalted Founder of the Christian church possessed in all its fulness, and which was shed forth on the day of Pentecost, was also infused more or less into the institutions, ceremonies, rites, and customs of the church; and that though these were elsewhere derived, they still retain the imprint of his own character; nay, more, that this Spirit originated not a few institutions and usages of the church, and manifested

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\* On the title-page of his first volume he has inscribed the following sentiment from Cyprian—"Triticum non rapit ventus, nec arborem solida radice fundatam procella subvertit. Inanes paleæ tempestate jactantur, invalidæ arbores turbinis incursione evertuntur,"—which sufficiently indicates the spirit and character of his criticisms.

itself in them. This is at once the most interesting and the most important element of Christian antiquities; so that a true and just investigation must take into consideration, not only the outward circumstances, but the inward spirit of the ancient church, and must keep steadily in view the forming influence of the Divine Spirit. It must keep before the mind the combined influence of these two different agencies, the visible and the invisible. For the understanding of these outward agencies, the intellect, conversant only with sensible and earthly things, is fully competent; but is wholly incompetent to investigate the internal agencies, while all that is supernatural and divine lies wholly without the range of its vision. If brought to the investigation of such divine agency, it is to be feared that the understanding will proceed only so far as altogether to deny the existence of this agency. An enlightened religious consciousness is an indispensable qualification for the investigation of that divine influence which was the original source of the ordinances and institutions of the church."

Guericke of Halle, the enlightened Christian scholar, and the accomplished historian of the church, has also applied his own skilful hand to the task of providing the public with a suitable manual on the Antiquities of the Christian Church. Though sympathizing with Böhmer in his religious views, he objects to his work as too learned and recondite; then, as in his history, he has pursued a middle course between Neander and Gieseler, so in his archaeology he proposes to himself the same *auream mediocritatem* between the plethoric fulness of Augusti and the naked skeleton of Rheinwald. The result is an admirable Manual in the fair proportions, the grace and finish which characterize all the works of Guericke.

In 1839, a Manual of Christian Antiquities was published in London, compiled from much the same sources as the following, by the Rev. J. E. Riddle, an accomplished scholar of Oxford. The author is an earnest dissenter from the Tractarian and high-church party, but a decided Episcopalian, a zealous and candid advocate for "episcopacy, charity, and peace." We acknowledge ourselves under many obligations to this author, though occupying a standpoint quite opposite to his—that of a dissenter from episcopacy and prelacy in any form, and taking our departure from him, in a multitude of instances, under a firm conviction that episcopacy and prelacy have no authority either in the teachings of Christ and his apostles, or in the examples and traditions of the apostolical churches.

Why, in view of all the labours of the learned, age after age, to elucidate and enrich this branch of ecclesiastical history, why is it, in this country, so neglected? Who can intelligently read the history of the Christian Church without attention to its institutions, offices, rites, and ceremonies? The history of *these* is the history of the Church. To follow out the sufferings and trials of the early Christians, their patience and fortitude under persecution, and the cruelty of their persecutors, is but to write a single chapter of their history, and that of least importance. It reveals their patient endurance of a great fight of afflictions, but this is only a single trait of their character. Many other characteristics of equal interest—the spirit of the age in which they lived, with all the varied influences which formed or modified their religious sentiments, their institutions, and their ritual of worship—these all remain unrecorded, unknown. No individual who is desirous of viewing the character of Christianity and the conduct of its professors under all circumstances, and particularly of contemplating the human mind under extraordinary moral influences,—of watching the various experiments of Christianity when combined in a social system with other elements, can consent to be excluded from such a source of instruction as is found in the antiquities of the Christian church.

Christian antiquities are indispensable as a key to many parts of ecclesiastical history. The very same circumstance which renders Greek and Roman antiquities important to the classical student, and Jewish antiquities to the biblical student, renders Christian antiquities important to the ecclesiastical historian. He who supposes that he can find all he needs on this subject in certain chapters in general works on church history has only to make the trial, and then take up some work on this subject, and compare the results, and the difference will be sufficiently perceptible. Church history itself has gained no less by making this a distinct branch of study than by making the history of Christian doctrines a distinct branch; both have contributed immeasurably to the advancement of the historical branch of theology within a few years past. How much broader and clearer the light which now shines on this whole department of study than at the close of the last century!

Above all archæological investigations, those that relate to the Christian church possess a lively interest, important and peculiar. The Hebrew commonwealth, the Roman and the Grecian republics have passed away. We are neither Hebrews, Greeks, nor Romans;

and yet endless research is lavished on their antiquities. But we *are* Christians, and the church continues to this present time, with its sacred ordinances, its constitutions, its discipline, its offices, and its solemn rites of worship. Why, then, is not a knowledge of its antiquities to us, Christians, an object of surpassing interest, above those of pagan Greece and Rome? Why do not the antiquities of the Christian church exceed in importance those even of the Jewish church, as far as the Christian excels the Jewish religion? *Hebræorum respublica cum veteri lege tumulo pridem illata est. Græcia sub mausoleis et pyramidibus suis sepulta jacet. Romana gloria atque potentia inter triumphos suos consenuit. . . . Modo Hebræi non sumus, neque Græci, neque Romani . . . neque amplius harum gentium moribus vivimus. Quid ergo nos juvat, illarum antiqua tempora, mores et monumenta, tanto studio a rudibus suis ac tenebris in lucem protrahere, dum interea obliti vivimus eorum, quæ domestica nobis sunt et esse deberunt? Dixi, non sumus Hebræi, non Græci, non Romani—attamen Christianos nos omnes esse profitemur in hodiernam usque diem. Horum itaque quorum nomine, disciplina, et religione insigniti etiamnum vivimus, horum, inquam, antiquitates cognoscere præ omnibus cæteris, rem summi momenti, summæ utilitatis, ac gloriæ, futuram esse judicavi.\**

But the *polemic* importance of this branch of ecclesiastical history, at present, outweighs all others, with reference to the extraordinary assumptions and encroachments of prelacy. For all these a venerable antiquity is claimed, and continually reiterated, as though the apostolical succession, diocesan government, episcopal ordination, the grace of the sacraments canonically administered, liturgical worship, with all the distinctive peculiarities of the prelatical system, were the pillars of the Church of Christ; parts of that temple which was reared by him and his apostles to stand forever, for the admiration and imitation of their followers. These pretensions and claims are entirely disowned by the whole body of dissenters. They maintain that there is, underlying all the ancient forms of prelacy, another system still more ancient, more simple, and deeper laid; which itself, after the vast incongruous structures which prelacy and papacy have thrown up around and over it are cleared away, stands forth in sublime simplicity and symmetry, a divine pattern for the imitation of the church of Christ in every age. The defence of those opposing views respecting the primitive church is the great controversy of the age; it is a renewal of the

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\* Mannhart, cited by Riddle.

controversy of the Reformation. It is sustained on either side by an appeal to history, after the research of three hundred years by the learned of every communion in christendom. In these polemics every theological student, every pastor, every Christian scholar is an unavoidable combatant, and must provide himself with historical armour for the conflict.

Neither should the liberalizing influence of this study be forgotten. Like foreign travel, it inspires a Christian catholicism superior to the bigotry and intolerance of sect and party. One who has travelled far, and observed the practical fruits of religion in different communities, however diversified their national peculiarities and ecclesiastical institutions, learns to judge charitably of all; so, after a wide range of historical research, which exhibits the spirit of practical Christianity, the same, age after age, under all the shifting forms of church government and worship in which it appears, he exchanges the prejudices of partizan zeal for the catholic and Christian sentiment: "In things essential, *unity*; in things not essential, *liberty*; in all things, *charity*."



# ANCIENT CHRISTIANITY.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE EARLIEST AUTHENTIC NOTICES OF THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS.

THE work on which we here enter requires us to study both the private life and the public institutions of the primitive Christians. They exemplified their true character in the sanctities of their religion and in the charities of life; by stern inward piety, and amid the scenes of the family and of social life; by their deeds of charity towards the persecuted, the destitute, the dying, and the dead; and in their various relations to the authorities of the state. A due attention to these several particulars in their religious life will prepare us to enter more intelligently upon the examination of their several religious rites, and their various offices and institutions relating to the organization and government of the church. The religious life of the primitive Christians may be favourably introduced to our notice by several citations of the earliest and most authentic records of their manners and their morals, of their faith and piety, as unconsciously certified by their enemies and directly attested and exemplified by themselves.

#### § 1. ACCOUNTS OF JEWISH AND PROFANE AUTHORS.

To one who would study the early history of the primitive church, or critically examine its polity, the testimony of contemporary writers of another faith is peculiarly important. But such writers, both Jewish and profane, of the first three centuries of the Christian era, unfortunately afford us very imperfect information on these points. The Jews, from whom we might expect the fullest information, offer us none of any value. The celebrated passage

in Josephus, which has been so often controverted, even if genuine, only proves that he had knowledge of the Author of the Christian religion and some faint apprehensions of his exalted character; but it gives us no knowledge of the religion which he taught. Nor does Philo, his contemporary, offer any essential aid to our inquiries.

Greek and Roman authors, especially the latter, take but little notice of the early Christians. They regarded the Christians as only an heretical body of Jews, or as a detestable and dangerous sect. Accordingly, the passages in which Suetonius,<sup>1</sup> Tacitus,<sup>2</sup> Arrian, Antoninus, Dion Cassius, and other writers speak of Christians, throw little or no light on their manners and customs.

The most important notices of this kind occur in the letters of Pliny the younger, who, according to the most approved chronology, was governor of Bithynia in the years A. D. 103, 104, and in the writings of Lucian of Samosata, an opponent of Christianity, who also lived in the second century. Pliny had been instructed by the emperor Trajan to keep a strict guard against all secret societies, *hetærias*, and, under this commission, proceeded to severe measures against the assemblies of Christians. In reporting his proceedings to the emperor, he takes occasion to explain the character of these Christians, and the nature of their assemblies. In this manner he unconsciously passes a high encomium upon these primitive Christians. The letter itself was written but about forty years after the death of St. Paul, and, together with Trajan's reply, constitutes the most important record extant of the times immediately succeeding the apostles. They are accordingly given entire, in a translation by Melmoth.

*Pliny to the Emperor Trajan.*

"It is a rule, sir, which I inviolably observe, to refer myself to you in all my doubts; for who is more capable of removing my scruples or informing my ignorance? Having never been present at any trials concerning those who profess Christianity, I am unacquainted, not only with the nature of their crimes, or the measure of their punishment, but how far it is proper to enter into an examination concerning them. Whether, therefore, any difference is usually made with respect to the ages of the guilty, or no distinction is to be observed between the young and the adult; whether repentance entitles them to a pardon; or, if a man has once been a Christian, it avails nothing to desist from his error; whether the

very profession of Christianity, unattended with any criminal act, or only the crimes themselves inherent in the profession, are punishable: in all these points I am greatly doubtful. In the mean while, the method I have observed towards those who have been brought before me as Christians, is this:—I interrogated them whether they were Christians; if they confessed, I repeated the question twice again, adding threats at the same time; when, if they still persevered, I ordered them to be immediately punished; for I was persuaded, whatever the nature of their opinions might be, that a contumacious and inflexible obstinacy certainly deserved correction. There were others also brought before me, possessed with the same infatuation, but being citizens of Rome\* I directed them to be carried thither. But this crime spreading, (as is usually the case,) while it was actually under prosecution, several instances of the same nature occurred. An information was presented to me, without any name prescribed, containing a charge against several persons who, upon examination, denied they were Christians, or had ever been so. They repeated after me an invocation to the gods, and offered religious rites with wine and frankincense before your statue, (which for this purpose I had ordered to be brought, together with those of the gods,) and even reviled the name of Christ: whereas there is no forcing, it is said, those who are really Christians into a compliance with any of these articles. I thought proper, therefore, to discharge them. Some of those who were accused by a witness in person, at first confessed themselves Christians, but immediately after denied it; while the rest owned, indeed, that they had been of that number formerly, but had now (some above three, others more, and a few above twenty years ago) forsaken that error. They all worshipped your statue and the images of the gods, throwing out imprecations also at the same time against the name of Christ. They affirmed that the whole of their guilt or error was, that they met on a certain stated day, before it was light, and addressed themselves in a form of prayer to Christ, as to some god, binding themselves by a solemn oath, not for the purposes of any wicked design, but never to commit any fraud, theft, or adultery; never to falsify their word,

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\* It was one of the privileges of a Roman citizen, secured by the Sempronian law, that he could not be capitally convicted but by the suffrage of the people; which seems to have been still so far in force as to make it necessary to send the persons here mentioned to Rome.—MELMOTH.

nor deny a trust when they should be called upon to deliver it up; after which it was their custom to separate, and then reassemble to eat in common a harmless meal. From this custom, however, they desisted after the publication of my edict, by which, according to your orders, I forbade the meeting of any assemblies. After receiving this account, I judged it so much the more necessary to endeavour to extort the real truth by putting two female slaves to the torture who were said to administer in their religious functions:\* but I could discover nothing more than an absurd and excessive superstition. I thought proper, therefore, to adjourn all further proceedings in this affair, in order to consult with you. For it appears to be a matter highly deserving your consideration, more especially as great numbers must be involved in the danger of these persecutions, this inquiry having already extended, and being still likely to extend, to persons of all ranks and ages, and even of both sexes. For this contagious superstition is not confined to the cities only, but has spread its infection among the country villages. Nevertheless, it still seems possible to remedy this evil and restrain its progress. The temples, at least, which were almost deserted, begin now to be frequented; and the sacred solemnities, after a long intermission, are again revived; while there is a general demand for the victims which, for some time past, have met with but few purchasers. From hence it is easy to imagine what numbers might be reclaimed from this error, if a pardon were granted to those who shall repent."

*Trajan to Pliny.*

"The method you have pursued, my dear Pliny, in the proceedings against those Christians which were brought before you, is extremely proper; as it is not possible to lay down any fixed plan by which to act in all cases of this nature. But I would not have you officiously enter into any inquiries concerning them. If, indeed, they should be brought before you, and the crime is proved, they must be punished; with this restriction, however, that when the party denies himself to be a Christian, and shall make it evident that he is not, by invoking our gods, let him (notwithstanding any former suspicion) be pardoned upon his repentance. Informations without the accuser's name subscribed ought not to be received in prosecutions of any sort; as it is introducing a very

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\* Deaconesses.

dangerous precedent, and by no means agreeable to the equity of my government."

From this record of antiquity, we learn several important particulars respecting the early Christians :

1. That they were accustomed to meet on a certain stated day for religious worship—whether on the first or last day of the week does not appear.

2. Their meetings were held in the morning, before daylight. Tertullian styles them *conventus antelucanos*, assemblies convened before the dawn. It was a general custom for the Christians to meet at this early hour; doubtless, that they might the better avoid the notice of their enemies.

3. They appear not to have had, at this time, any stated place of worship.

4. They worshipped Christ as God. The phrase *carmen Christo quasi Deo dicere secum invicem* may imply any short ascription of praise to Christ—a doxology, a prayer, a psalm or hymn in prose or verse, though the latter is most probable. The phrase *quasi Christo* has been rendered "as to some God," as the language of Pliny; but this does not materially affect the argument: whatever may have been his views, he asserts that, to the Christians, Christ was the object of worship to whom they offered this doxology or prayer, rehearsing it alternately or in responses.

It appears from this passage, that these Christians not only believed the doctrine of the divinity of Christ, but manifested great boldness in asserting it.

5. They celebrated their love-feasts in these assemblies, and bound themselves by a mutual covenant to live a godly life. In the evening, they came together again to celebrate the Lord's supper. This is implied in their eating together "a harmless meal."

The reading, exposition, and application of the Scriptures in these assemblies appears to be distinctly implied, though not expressly asserted.

6. This epistle bears honourable testimony to unflinching steadfastness of faith in these Christians, which Pliny styles an absurd and excessive superstition.

7. This epistle affords a striking proof of the early and extensive propagation of Christianity, and of its tendency to overthrow idolatry. It also confirms the statements of the early apologists



respecting the same points; while it establishes our confidence in their statements where we have not, as in this case, the testimony of contemporary writers.

*Lucian, of Samosata.*

One of the earliest and most interesting accounts of the primitive Christians is left on record also by Lucian, an infidel, a scoffer of all religion and a universal skeptic. He lived, probably, a little later than Pliny and Trajan, and almost within a hundred years of the great Author of Christianity. In sketching the life of Peregrinus, a mountebank impostor, who had the address to gain the confidence of the Christians and to exercise the office of a presbyter and teacher among them for some time, until his real character became known and he was expelled by them from their communion, Lucian gives an account of these Christians of Palestine themselves. A native of Syria, and a shrewd observer of men, by extensive travels in Greece, Italy, Gaul, and Egypt, he enjoyed the best advantages for becoming acquainted with the real character of these primitive Christians.

“At this time he (Peregrinus) came into possession of the wonderful wisdom, σοφίαν, of the Christians. And to what purpose? Why, in a short time, he proved them but children, himself becoming their prophet and sacrificer, their leader in the synagogue and every thing else. Some also of their books he brought forth and divulged: he also composed many, and they reckoned him as a god and followed him as a lawgiver, and declared him their chief. They were, at that time, and still are doing reverence to Him, that great man who was crucified in Palestine, because he brought that new doctrine (τελετήν, end or object) into life.”

“For this also was Proteus, alias Peregrinus, apprehended and cast into prison. This imprisonment he reckoned no small subject of boasting, in conformity with the usual turn of his life, with his fondness for exciting wonder, and his vain-glory of which he was enamoured. But when he had been bound, the Christians, thinking it a common misfortune, made every effort for his deliverance. When this was found impossible, they rendered him every assistance in their power, not with indifference, but with zeal. From early morning were to be seen old women, widows, and orphans wandering about the prison. And some of his friends, in fulfilment of what they considered their duty, slept with him in prison, having corrupted the guards. Moreover, various dishes

were carried in; their divine narratives were read, and this excellent Peregrinus (for so they regarded him as yet) was accounted a new Socrates by them.

"Christians came also from the cities of Asia, sent at common expense, in order to assist and carry on the synagogue with them and give consolation to the man. It is wonderful what alertness is displayed when any such calamity happens. For, upon the shortest notice, they lavish out every thing in profusion. At this time, no small contributions were made for Peregrinus because he was in bonds. The miserable devotees persuade themselves that they are immortal and shall live for ever. For this reason they also despise death, and many willingly give themselves up to martyrdom. Moreover, their lawgiver, the first, enjoined them to be brethren; that, having once professed the new religion, they should deny the Grecian gods and worship that sophist of theirs who was crucified, and live according to his laws. They therefore despise all others alike, whoever they may be, and consider every thing common among themselves, each freely receiving without making any pledge. If, therefore, there came among them any mountebank or diviner, he in a short time became rich, making drafts upon private men who were considered as brothers."

After stating that Peregrinus was released by the governor of Syria, Lucian proceeds with his narrative. "He then went forth to wander about the second time, calling upon Christians to pay his fare; by means of whom he also lived in abundance. In this manner he lived some time. But afterwards, having broken some law that prevailed among them, (I think he was caught eating something forbidden by them,) reduced to want, because they no longer received and admitted him, he made another attempt to get possession of his paternal estate."

From this account of the primitive Christians, we may gather the following particulars:

1. Lucian distinctly speaks of them by their own name, though with the utmost contempt.

2. Of the *crucified Redeemer* as a person well known in his time. Our Saviour is *Him crucified*; sufficiently known to all, about whom there is no doubt or uncertainty. The whole narrative proceeds on the supposition that the Author of this new religion was a remarkable personage, who lived some little time previous in Palestine, and was there crucified. He probably re

garded this "great man, this lawgiver," as one of the magi, or wise men of the East.

3. This religion which he taught is new and peculiar, distinct from other forms of religion; it is the *wonderful wisdom* or *sophistry*, τὴν θαυμαστὴν σοφίαν, and accords very well with the *prava et immodica superstitio* of Pliny and Tacitus.

4. Lucian is witness to the sobriety, prayerfulness, and godliness of these Christians; as is implied in the feigned life which this dissembler and impostor was required to live, in order to gain their confidence. Had the character of Christians not differed from that of other men, such a pretended conversion would have been quite needless on the part of Peregrinus.

5. Their wonderful charity, benevolence, and mutual sympathy with their afflicted and persecuted brethren is distinctly affirmed of these Christians.

6. Their patience under sufferings, arising from their hopes of a future life, is worthy of consideration.

7. Their unity and fellowship as brethren and their strictness of discipline are particularly noticeable. Peregrinus was received and cherished as a brother beloved by them until his character became known, when he was excommunicated and treated according to his deserts as a heathen man and a base impostor.

8. Lucian records the readiness of Christians to relieve and support those who were sick or in prison.

9. He mentions their δεῖπνα ποικίλα, their manifold meals, referring obviously to their *agapæ* and sacramental suppers, possibly to abuses similar to those which are reproved by the apostle Paul, 1 Cor. xi. 20-22.

10. It is observable also that Lucian makes mention of the sacred books of the Christians; and also,

11. Of their community of goods, as is described Acts iv. 32-37; and,

12. Of certain prohibited articles, as specified also by the church at Jerusalem, Acts xv. 20; xxi. 25;—all which evinces their piety and benevolence and diligence in the Christian life.

Finally, these Christians not only worshipped Christ as the divine Author of their religion, but as one of the persons in the sacred Trinity. The terms employed by Lucian, ἐπὶ σέβουσι, προσκυνῶσι, indicate *religious worship, reverence to Christ as to a god*. Moreover, the Philopatris, usually ascribed to Lucian, though its authenticity is denied by many, distinctly recognises the doc-

trine of the Trinity, consisting of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, *one in three* and *three in one*, as expressed by Criton, ἓν τρία, and τρία ἓν. The words of the Philopatris are given below.

Υψιμέδοντα Θεόν, μέγαν, ἄμβροτον, οὐρανίωνα,  
 Υἱὸν Πατρὸς, Πνεῦμα ἐκ Πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον,  
 Ἐν ἐκ Τριῶν, καὶ ἐξ Ἑνὸς Τρία·  
 Ταῦτα νόμιζε Ζήνα, τὸν δ' ἡγοῦ Θεόν.

## § 2. CHRISTIAN AUTHORS.

### *The Epistle to Diognetus.*

THE epistle to Diognetus is one of the most interesting and valuable remains of Christian antiquity. Nothing is known of the author; but it is the production of a man of deep thought and of a devout spirit. The picture which he gives of the excellence of the Christian life is beyond measure captivating, and forms a fit introduction to the following delineation of the domestic, social, and religious life of the primitive Christians.

The precise date of this epistle is as uncertain as its authorship, though all authorities concur in giving it a high antiquity. Some refer it to the age of the apostles; others, like Neander, to that immediately succeeding; and almost all concur in assigning to it an antiquity as remote as the middle of the second century. At some time between this early period and that of the apostles lived the unknown author of this authentic picture of primitive piety, a considerable portion of which is submitted to the perusal of the reader in the following translation:

"I observe, most excellent Diognetus, that you are very curious to become acquainted with the religion of the Christians; and particularly careful to ascertain what God they worship, and what may be their forms of worship; for while they seem to look forward to something beyond this life, fearless of death, they deny the gods of the Greek and disregard the religion of the Jew; but manifest an extraordinary affection one towards another. What, then, is this new institution or form of religion? Why has it made its appearance *now*, and not before? To this inquiry it shall be my happiness to reply, in prayerful reliance upon the blessing of God so to direct that I may have the happiness to hear that you have become a better man; and that you may never have occasion to regret the instructions received.



*Christian Paradoxes.*—Christians are not distinguished by their place of residence, their language, or their manners; but they inhabit the same cities, use the same forms of speech, and engage in the same pursuits as other men. They neither have any skill in hidden mysteries above other men, nor do they defend any doctrines of men. Dwelling in cities of Greeks and barbarians, each where his lot is cast, in clothing, food, and manner of life, they follow the customs of their country, and yet they exhibit a life and conversation of wonderful paradoxes. They inhabit their own native land, but only as foreigners and strangers; as citizens, they take a part in every thing, but endure all things as strangers; every foreign land is to them their native country; and their native country, a foreign land. They marry and rear up their families unlike those who, without natural affection, expose their children to death; they live in common, but in chaste observance of their marriage-vows. They live in the flesh, but not after the flesh; they dwell on the earth, but have their mansions in heaven; they obey the existing laws, but in their lives are superior to all law; loving all men, they are persecuted by all; living unknown, they are condemned to death; they are slain, and behold they live; though poor, they make many rich; in want of every thing, they have abundance; in dishonour, they are but esteemed the more; when defamed, they are vindicated; when reviled, they bless; for insolence, they return honour; for well-doing, they are punished as evil-doers, and yet rejoice in their punishments as being made alive. Rejected by the Jews as aliens, they are persecuted by the Greeks; and though hated of all men, none can show cause of enmity against them.

In a word, Christians are in the world what the body is to the soul. As the soul is diffused through all the members, so are these Christians dispersed throughout all the cities in the world. The soul is in the body, though not of the body; they, though in the world, are not of the world. The soul dwells unseen in the body; so the Christians are known to be in the world, and yet their piety is unseen, unknown. The flesh, without cause, wars against the spirit, because this is opposed to the indulgence of sinful pleasures; so the world unjustly hates these Christians, because they oppose the pleasures of the world. As the soul loveth its own flesh and the members that war against it, so Christians love those that hate them; the soul upholds the body in which it is detained, so the Christians preserve the world in which they are imprisoned. The soul, itself immortal, inhabits this perishable tabernacle of the



flesh, so they inhabit these dying bodies, confidently expecting this corruptible to put on incorruption. The soul, debased, impaired by sense, only triumphs the more; so the Christians, the more they are reduced by persecution, only increase the more.

*The Mission of Christ our Lord.*—God has imposed upon the Christian responsibilities which he can neither disown nor reject; not, indeed, of an earthly or perishable character, nor pertaining to human institutions, but resulting from his truth, his holy word, he has mysteriously implanted in their hearts. Not, again, as though he had sent any subordinate minister of his, as an angel or potentate, intrusted either with divine or earthly power; but he has sent Him who is the Creator and Governor of all things: who setteth bounds to the sea that it cannot pass, and directeth the stars of heaven in their courses; whom the sun and moon obey in their appointed place, and to whom all things are subject; the heavens above and all that are therein; the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and the world beneath them. Has God, then, done all this that he might reign in terror as a tyrant? Far from it; but to rule in meekness and gentleness. As a sovereign, God has sent his Son to execute the office of a King; as God, to be the Saviour of man; and as a servant, to learn obedience and do no violence; for violence belongs not to God. In mercy, he has sent him to fulfil the kind offices of invitation and of love, not to sit in judgment; but he will yet commission him to go forth in judgment, and who then shall be able to abide his coming? See you not that those who are delivered up to wild beasts, because they will not deny their God, are not overcome, but only increase the more, the more they are persecuted? This is not the work of man, but of God, and an evident token of his coming.

How miserable was the condition of men before the coming of Him that was sent? What knowledge had they of God? Fire, water, the elements, or some created thing undistinguished from other works of creation, they acknowledged as their god. Of God himself no man knew any thing; but he revealed himself through faith, by which alone God is seen. For the Supreme Ruler and Governor of all things ever was, and is, and will be merciful and gracious, true and faithful, and longsuffering. Fulfilling his holy will in mysterious darkness, he seemed not to regard the affairs of men. But when, through his beloved Son, he began to reveal the things he had from the beginning prepared for us, he freely gave us all things and made us partakers of his benefits.

God, in former times, had left us to walk after our own lusts; not, indeed, himself having pleasure in our sins, but that he might awaken the consciousness of guilt and cause us to see how unworthy we were of life, and thus be prepared to receive his grace. Having in this manner manifested our unworthiness of the kingdom of God, we are made partakers of it by his power. When the measure of our iniquities was full, and it was made apparent that the wages thereof was death; when the fulness of time, appointed of God for revealing his powerful grace, had come, then, of his transcendent love, neither exercising his displeasure towards us, nor casting us off, nor remembering our transgressions against us, but in his long-suffering bearing with us, he took upon himself our sins. He gave his only Son to be a ransom for us—the righteous, for the unrighteous; the holy, for the unholy; the just, for the unjust; the mortal, for the immortal. What but his righteousness can hide our sins? Or, by whom can we, in our impiety and transgression, be justified, save by the only-begotten Son of God. Delightful change! What unsearchable wisdom! what unspeakable blessings! that one righteous person should put away the sins of many and justify them by his own righteousness. Having first shown the impossibility of obtaining salvation ourselves, and then offered a Saviour able to save to the uttermost, he now challenges our faith in him as our Creator and Preserver, our Counsellor and great Physician, as our wisdom, honour, glory, strength, and salvation, that we should be careful for nothing pertaining to this life.

*The Happiness of Religion.*—Would you, Diognetus, but receive this faith, then you should know the grace of God. For God, who has indeed loved us, for whom he made the world, subjecting all that is therein unto us, whom alone he has created in his own image and endowed with intelligence to know him, and to whom he has sent his only-begotten Son, will surely grant his heavenly kingdom to all that love him. Did you but know him, with what joy would you be filled! How would you love him who first loved you, and pattern after his benevolence! Marvel not that man should be conformed to God. For it is not by authority over others, not by wealth or power, that you find happiness, or become assimilated to God, but by bearing the burdens of your neighbour, by condescension and kindness to inferiors, and by imparting to the needy according as God in his good providence has given to you: by so doing may you become godlike in the Christian virtues.

Then, while yet on the earth, you shall see him that reigns in heaven. Then shall you begin to speak forth the mysteries of God. Then shall you admire and love those who are persecuted for their fidelity to God. Then shall you rebuke the deceitfulness of the world, when you have your conversation in heaven, when, regardless of that which only seems to be death, you shall fear that dreadful death which will consign to everlasting fire, and punish to the end those that may be delivered up to it."

In these extracts we observe the devout spirit of one who has communed familiarly with Christ and his apostles. They set forth Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of lost men, as the cornerstone of the Christian system. They teach for doctrine the endless misery of the wicked, and many of the cardinal principles of the Christian religion; while they exhibit the transforming power of grace, and the amiable influence of this religion upon the personal character of the Christian in all the relations of life.

It is deeply interesting and instructive to observe how thoroughly these early Christians were possessed of the spirit of their Master, who was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners;" and who said to his disciples, "Ye are not of this world, even as I am not of this world." In simplicity and godly sincerity, they gave themselves up to the teaching of the Divine word, following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. By the mighty power of personal piety, fearlessly and beautifully exemplified in defiance of all opposition, at all times, and in every relation of life, they pressed on to higher conquests than Christianity since has ever won. By the simple power of faith, manifested in a holy life, "they subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." In the midst of the most fiery persecutions, the church, though burned with fire, like the burning bush, was not consumed, but only flourished and spread the more. "Torment, rack, condemn, crush us," says Tertullian, "the most exquisite cruelty which ye can devise avails you nothing; but rather induces the more to become Christians. As often as we are cut down by persecutions, we spring up the more abundantly. THE BLOOD OF CHRISTIANS IS THE SEED OF THE CHURCH."

*Propagation of Christianity.*

Before the apostles ceased from their mission, the day-spring from on high had shed its illuminations over the wide realms of darkness which stretched from the Euphrates to the coasts of Spain and Britain. It had visited Arabia and Egypt, and gilded with its heavenly radiance even the Mediterranean coasts of benighted Africa. Within fourscore years after the death of Christ, Pliny affirms that the temples were almost deserted; that the sacred victims devoted to the altar scarcely found any purchasers; that the superstition had not only infected the cities, but had even spread itself into the villages and the open country of Pontus and Bithynia. At the distance of another century, Tertullian represents the enemies of Christianity as complaining that the whole state is overrun with it. "They lament it as a great calamity, that Christians are found in countries, in cities, in the islands, that persons of each sex, and of all ages and station and dignity, come over to that name." "We are but of yesterday," he continues in another place, "and have already filled all your empire, your towns, islands, forts, boroughs, councils, your very camp, every tribe and quarter of the city, the palace, the senate, the forum. We leave you nothing but your temples. Calculate the number of your armies, and the Christians of a single province would exceed it."<sup>1</sup> In other passages, he speaks of Christians as forming almost a majority in every place; and refers to the diffusion of Christianity in Carthage and other provinces of Africa; in Spain, Gaul, and Britain; in Germany and Scythia, and many other obscure nations, provinces, and islands too numerous to be mentioned."<sup>2</sup>

After making all reasonable allowance for rhetorical exaggeration in Tertullian, it must stand confessed, to the immortal honour of the earliest missionaries of the gospel of Christ, that, in a short space of one hundred and fifty years, they had published its glad tidings to all the principal nations of the earth; to men of every colour, clime, and condition. They had gained their conquests in the Roman legion, in the camp, the cabinet, and the court; and carried them up even to the throne of the Cæsars: all which was but the gracious fruit of their fervent charity, and their faith and patience in the service of their Lord and Master.



*The Works of the Apostolic Fathers.*

Under this title are included the epistles of Clement, Barnabas, Polycarp, and Ignatius; together with the Shepherd of Hermas. Of these venerable remnants of antiquity, the most important is the Epistle of Clement of Rome to the church at Corinth. He writes not by his own authority, but in the name of his church; and addresses, not the bishops, but the church itself at Corinth. He recognises no distinction between bishop and presbyter; but uses these terms (c. 42, 44) as synonymous, and gives several important hints respecting the earliest constitution of the Christian church.

This epistle is disfigured by interpolations; one of which (c. 40) transfers to the church the whole system of the Jewish priesthood, which was a corruption of the third century, to exalt the episcopal hierarchy, of which the apostles and their immediate successors knew nothing.

Clement is supposed, by some, to be the same person whom Paul commends to the Philippians, chap. vi. 3; and this opinion is supported by several ancient authorities.<sup>3</sup>

The date of this epistle is, by some writers, assigned to the period, A. D. 68-77; by others, to A. D. 91 or 92.

The Epistle of Barnabas, bearing the honoured name of the companion of Paul in his missionary labours, is evidently spurious. It abounds in fabulous narratives, mystic allegorical interpretations of the Old Testament, and fanciful conceits; and is generally agreed by the learned to be of no authority. Neander supposes it to have originated in the Alexandrian school; but at what particular time he does not define.

Polycarp of Smyrna, the venerable disciple of John, the last survivor of the apostolic age, suffered martyrdom in the year 167. He left an epistle to the Philippians, which is generally received as genuine. It is chiefly occupied with pious exhortations; and, though of great interest, gives little information respecting the ecclesiastical polity of the apostolical churches.

Ignatius of Antioch, was contemporary with John, and, perhaps, of other apostles. His martyrdom at Rome is assigned, by some, to a period as early as 106 or 107; by others, as late as 115 or 116. Some passages in his letters indicate a high antiquity; but many others are evidently the production of a later age. They generally recognise a wide and settled distinction between bishops



and presbyters, and claim for them an authority wholly unknown in the primitive church. We are told, that Christians ought to look up to the bishop as to the Lord himself;<sup>4</sup> that they ought to follow the bishops as Jesus Christ complied with the will of the Father, and to submit themselves to the presbyters as to the apostles;<sup>5</sup> and that he who should do any thing without the consent of his bishop, would be a servant of the devil.<sup>6</sup> None can fail to see in those passages the corruptions of an age remote from that of the apostles. Certain it is that these epistles, if not an entire forgery, are so filled with interpolations and forgeries as to be of no historical value with reference to the primitive Christians and the apostolic churches.

The Shepherd of Hermas is the production of a weak and visionary mind; well suited to form a wild, disordered fanatic. It personates an angel, in the form and garb of a shepherd, giving instructions by visions, precepts, and parables, so filled with folly and superstition, with ridiculous associations and ingenious nonsense, though blended with good intentions, that it is unworthy of the least credit as an authentic record of history.

#### *Constitutions and Canons of the Apostles.*

The learned have been greatly divided in opinion respecting the origin and date of these constitutions. They are, confessedly, a forgery; and of no authority as an expression of the teaching of the apostles; but highly important for their antiquity, and as an exponent of the views prevalent at the time of their publication respecting the prerogatives of the bishop and the duties of the subordinate officers and members of the church. The Constitutions consist of eight books; of which the first seven appear to be the production of the same age, the latter part of the *third* century and the beginning of the *fourth*. The eighth book is supposed to be the work of other hands, about a century later.

The design of the authors of this pious fraud evidently was to set up an authoritative standard for all the members of the church, both of the laity and the clergy; to determine more closely their mutual relations and respective duties; to settle more exactly the usages of the church, to explain their meaning, and promote their more strict observance; and especially to establish the authority of the bishop. The *first* book, "concerning the laity," comprehends various moral precepts; the *second* book treats very copiously respecting the position and the duties of the bishops and the lower

clergy; the *third* determines the duties of widows, who then made a part of the clerical or spiritual community, prescribes their ecclesiastical offices, and the duties of some of the lower clergy; the *fourth*, "concerning orphans," defines their relations to the bishops, and then imparts precepts respecting oblations and other matters; the *fifth* book, "concerning martyrs," enforces various precepts and warnings against apostasy, idolatry, and immoralities connected with them, and the festivals of the church; the *sixth* book, "concerning schisms," enlarges on the multiplied divisions and heresies of the church, and on the evils thence arising, intermingling many admonitions against heretics; the *seventh* book embraces a multitude of directions relating to the inner ecclesiastical life. Throughout the whole work, the bishop is ever foremost in honour and in authority; and submission to him is inculcated as among the first Christian graces. Indeed, he is profanely set up as an earthly god. "The bishop is the minister of the word, the keeper of knowledge, the mediator between God and you in the several parts of your Divine worship. He is the teacher of piety; and, next after God, he is your father who hath begotten you again to the adoption of sons by water and the Spirit. He is your ruler and governor; he is your king and potentate; he is, next after God, your earthly god, who hath a right to be honoured by you."<sup>7</sup> To secure this unlimited respect and authority for the bishop, the author is continually sending us back to the Old Testament, seeking analogies between the clergy and the Levitical priesthood, to transfer this priesthood into the Christian church, with the bishop as its high-priest and supreme head.

The *eighth* book is chiefly occupied with the liturgical services of the church, and sets before us the state of the church and the liturgy in the age of Chrysostom, at the end of the fourth century. To give effect to these designs, the author puts forth his work as the genuine production of the holy apostles, and carefully warns us against books fabricated in their name by the ungodly.<sup>8</sup>

Neander expresses the opinion that the Constitutions were "formed gradually, in the Eastern church, out of different fragments, during a period reaching from the close of the second into the fourth century."<sup>9</sup>

The Apostolic Canons are of the same general character and design as the Constitutions. Mosheim supposes them to have originated with one and the same author. Krabbe subjoins to his elaborate Prize Essay on the Constitutions, a dissertation on the

Canons; in which he defends the position that these different canons originated chiefly in the course of the *second* and *third* centuries. The result of his investigations he sums up in a single sentence: "After having diligently examined all the testimonies, I would now, without any hesitancy, contend that the canons arose one after another, in single churches of the first centuries, until, instead of being dispersed here and there, they were brought into one collection.

"In the early church, single canons were circulated under the name of ancient canons, apostolical canons, ecclesiastical regulations and ancient law. Each of these canons, although made and sanctioned by later persons, has been ascribed to the apostles, if it has seemed to accord with their doctrine. These canons, therefore, were called apostolical, not [at first] from any supposed apostolical authorship, but from the nature of the doctrine inculcated in them."

The Canons relate chiefly to various particulars of ecclesiastical polity and Christian worship; the regulations which they contain being for the most part sanctioned with the threatening of deposition and excommunication against offenders. In the beginning of the sixth century, fifty of these canons were translated from Greek to Latin by the Roman abbot, Dionysius the younger, who introduced our mode of reckoning time from the birth of Christ; and about the same time, thirty-five others were appended to them in a collection made by John, patriarch of Constantinople. Since that time the whole number (eighty-five) have been regarded as genuine in the East; while only the first fifty have been treated with equal respect in the West.

The author may have had the same design as that which appears to have influenced the compiler of the Apostolical Constitutions. The eighty-fifth canon speaks of the Constitutions as sacred books; and, from a comparison of the two works, it is plain that they are either the production of one and the same writer, or that, at least, the two authors were contemporary, and had a good understanding with each other.

## // CHAPTER II.

### THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS.

IN these sketches of primitive Christianity, we go back to the ages immediately succeeding the apostles, to commune with those ancient professors of the Christian religion in the trials of their faith, in their inward piety towards God, and in their various domestic, social, and civil relations in life.

#### § 1. THE INWARD PIETY OF THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS THE PRINCIPAL MEANS OF PROPAGATING THEIR RELIGION.

THE means by which the unbelieving were converted to Christianity and to a true faith in Christ were then, as now, various; but one of the most persuasive was the blameless life of the converts to the Christian faith. Those Christians, who once freely indulged in all the vices and sins of the corrupt generation among whom they had their conversation, were now, in the midst of the same abounding corruptions, examples of the most extraordinary purity. Their enemies might hate the change; but they must acknowledge its reality and transforming power. Every Christian convert was thus an epistle of Christ, seen and read of all men. It was an argument that could not be gainsaid or resisted. No sophistry could set it aside. It wrought mightily upon the conscience, and won multitudes to the acknowledgment of the truth as it is in Jesus.

The early apologists understood the force of this appeal, and often employed it against their adversaries. "We, who once delighted in lewdness," says Justin Martyr, A. D. 148, "now embrace chastity; we, who once embraced magical arts, have consecrated ourselves to the good and unbegotten God; we, who loved above all things the gain of money and possessions, now bring all that we have into one common stock, and give a portion to every one that needs; we, who once hated and killed one another, now pray for our enemies, and endeavour to persuade those who unjustly hate us. Now, whosoever are found not to live as Christ taught,

let it be publicly known that they are not Christians, though they should profess with their tongues the doctrines of Christ."<sup>1</sup>

Tertullian, half a century later, makes the same confident appeal in behalf of Christianity: "But of so great a number of criminals as are found in your courts of justice, each with his own accusation, what murderer is found among them? what thief, what man guilty of sacrilege or of corrupting youth, what pilferer is described also as a Christian? Or, when any Christians are brought before you to answer to the charge of being such, who among them is found to be like so many of your own criminals? They are men of your own party who fill your prisons. Among these no Christian is found, unless the name of Christian be his only offence; or, if he be accused of any other crime, he has already ceased to be a Christian."<sup>2</sup>

Tatian, A. D. 170, says, "I desire not to reign; I wish not to be rich; I avoid military office; I abhor licentiousness; I care not to go out on long voyages at sea, through the insatiate love of gain; I contend not at games to win a crown; I am far removed from the mad love of glory; I am fearless of death; I am superior to every kind of disease; my soul is not consumed with grief. If a slave, I submit to my servitude; if free, I pride not myself in birth; I see one sun common to all, and death the common lot of all, whether they live in pleasure or in want." Such men were living examples of the transforming power of the Christian religion, observed and known of all men. Their piety was deep and earnest, instinct with life and love; their faith was warm, glowing with its first fires, a light to enlighten the Gentiles, a heavenly flame "at which descending ages might light their exhausted lamps." Their religion was practical, powerful, elevating, and wrought with transforming power upon the lives of others.

This preaching of the gospel by a holy life was far more powerful in convincing the ungodly and unbelieving than the actual preaching of the word of God. "Our God would not that we should oppose force to force, or requite evil for evil; but that, by meekness and patience, we should withdraw all men from evil lusts and a shameful life: which also we can show in many who have been subdued and changed from violent and tyrannical men, either by imitating the constancy of their neighbours' lives, or by observing the unusual patience of those with whom they travelled when they were defrauded on the way, or by experiencing the faithfulness of those with whom they had any dealing."<sup>3</sup>



Origen also, against Celsus, makes this his triumphant argument, to which he constantly appeals. "Inquire into their lives, compare their former with their present course, and you will find in what filthiness and impurities they wallowed before they embraced the Christian doctrine: but now how gentle, how moderate, how grave, how consistent they have become; so that some, influenced with the love of purity, even forbear from lawful gratifications. How largely are the churches of God, founded by Jesus Christ, spread over all nations, consisting of such as are converted from innumerable evil ways to a better mind."⁴ Athenagoras, A. D. 176, again says, "With us you may find ignorant people, mechanics, old women, who, though unable to prove with word the saving power of their religion, yet by their deed prove the saving influence of the disposition which it has bestowed upon them; for they do not learn words by rote, but they exhibit good works: when struck, they strike not again; when robbed, they do not go to law; they give to those that ask them, and love their neighbours as themselves."

## § 2. THEIR ELEVATED FAITH AND SUPERIORITY TO SUFFERING.

RELIGION, in those early Christians, was not a silent, inoperative assent to the truth,—a cold profession; but a living, life-giving principle, which formed their character and ruled their life. Things spiritual and eternal were living realities. The Scriptures were to them *lively oracles*. Heaven was their all-sufficient portion; in comparison to which, all else was to them of no account. They lived and acted under a deep consciousness that the Almighty, Omniscient God, Creator of heaven and earth, was their God, Saviour, and Redeemer, their Sustainer, Avenger, and final Judge. Accordingly, they walked with God in all the varied scenes of life. They communed with their God and Saviour as a man talketh with a friend, realizing in their own consciousness the fulfilment of our Saviour's promise, "If any love me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him."

This gave an intensity and earnestness to their religious character, as of men who were truly but pilgrims and strangers on earth, and whose conversation was in heaven. "Inflamed with the desire of a pure and an eternal life, we breathe after an intimate converse with God, the great Parent and Creator of the world, and make haste to seal our confession with our blood, in the full per-

suasion that they will attain to this state who, by their actions, study to approve themselves to God, and earnestly long to converse with him in that world where no evil shall have a place."<sup>1</sup>

Basil, A. D. 372, on being reminded that he might suffer the loss of his estate, banishment, torment, or death, replies, "Threaten us with something else, if you can, for none of these things can affect us. Confiscation cannot injure him who has nothing but a few books and his cloak to lose; nor can I be banished, who am bound to no place. Wherever I may be, that is my country. The whole earth is God's, in which I am but a pilgrim and a stranger. Death, which is accomplished at a single stroke, I fear not. It will be a kindness to me. It will sooner bring me to my God, for whose sake I live, and towards whom I have long been hastening. Wonder not at this freedom of speech, while in other things we are meek and yielding. Where the cause of God and religion is concerned, overlooking all other things, we direct our attention only unto him; and fire and sword, wild beasts and engines of torture are not a terror, but a joy unto us. Reproach, threaten, and exert your power to the utmost, yet let the emperor know that you will never be able to make us assent to your wicked doctrine; no, though you should threaten ten thousand times worse than this."<sup>2</sup> The governor, amazed at the resolution and spirit of the man, went and said to the emperor, "One poor bishop is too hard for us all."

In harmony with this spirit, Tertullian exclaims, "Give us what names you please: from the instruments of cruelty you torture us by, call us Sarmenticians and Semaxians, because you fasten us to trunks of trees, and stick us about with fagots to set us on fire; yet, let me tell you, when we are thus begirt and dressed about with fire, we are then in our most illustrious apparel. These are our victorious palms and robes of glory; and, mounted on our funeral pile, we look upon ourselves in our triumphal chariot. No wonder, then, such passive heroes please not those they vanquish with such conquering sufferings."

### § 3. THEIR PATIENCE UNDER INJURIES.

THE primitive Christians were remarkable for that full and hearty surrender with which they gave themselves up to the guidance and teaching of Christ, not only as their God, their Saviour and Redeemer, but as their pattern, their example. Followers of

God as dear children, they sought, in self-denial, in affliction and persecution, to imitate the Son of God in all the trying circumstances of his benevolent life. "God himself," says Tertullian, "is to us a pattern of patience, since he gives the dew of his light and all the gifts of nature equally to the whole human race, both to the worthy and the unworthy. Our blessed Saviour never rejected any one who wished to come to him; no table, no family did he ever despise; he called even publicans and sinners. He indulged in no anger against the city which refused him shelter and food, upon which his disciples would call down fire from heaven for its shameful treatment of him. He healed the ungrateful; he glided away from those who lay in wait for him; and, though he had his betrayer always with him, he never upbraided him for his treacherous dealings. When he was delivered up, he went like a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep under the hand of her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He who with one word could have commanded legions of angels to his aid, would not accept the avenging sword of a disciple. He who veiled himself in human form, could not consent to imitate human patience. O ye Pharisees! herein especially ought ye to have recognised your Lord, for such patience and meekness mere human nature could never have exhibited."

"Heavenly patience! She fortifies faith, she commands peace, she sustains love, she lays the foundation of humility, she controls the flesh, she guards the soul, she drives away offences, she perfects martyrdom, she comforts the poor, she gives moderation to the rich, she drives not the weak beyond their strength, she wastes not the might of the strong, she quickens the believer, she kindly allures the unbeliever, she gains for the servant the approbation of the master, for the master the approbation of God. She is lovely in the child, praiseworthy in the youth, venerable in the aged."

"Would we make a picture of patience? Gentle quiet rests upon her countenance; her forehead is smooth without a fold; there is no wrinkle of discontent or anger; her brows are never knit with anxious cares; her eyes are never cast down with the feeling of misery. A white robe infolds her bosom; there is the throne of the Spirit with the still small voice which once appeared to Elijah. Where God is, there is his daughter Patience. When the Spirit of God descends to the earth, Patience accompanies him; she is his inseparable companion. Will, then, the

Spirit of God dwell long with us, unless we receive her also with him? Without her, his companion and servant, he must, in every place and at all times, feel himself straitened; against the attacks of the adversary, he cannot long hold out alone without the companionship of patience. Such is the motive, such is the conduct, such are the works of that patience which is genuine and heavenly, and which may be truly called spiritual. This is quite a different thing from the false and shameful hardihood of the world. Let us love the patience of God, the patience of Christ; let us give that again to him which he has given for us. Let us who believe in the resurrection of the spirit and of the flesh, let us offer to him the patience of the spirit and the flesh. Oh, let the world be taken from me, if I can only gain patience."<sup>1</sup>

This heavenly temper, this converse with God and with things unseen, is exemplified by Cyprian. "Among us flourishes strength of hope, firmness of faith, a mind erect among the ruins of a tottering age, an immovable virtue, a patience serene and cheerful, and a soul always secure, certain of its God. What are want and danger to Christians, the servants of God, whom paradise invites, and for whom awaits the favour and fulness of the heavenly kingdom? They are always joyful in God, and calmly bear the evils and miseries of this life, while they look for the rewards and prosperities of another."<sup>2</sup>

#### § 4. THEIR RELIANCE UPON THE SUSTAINING POWER OF GOD.

THIS sense of the Divine presence is forcibly expressed by Theophilus of Antioch, A. D. 178, in reply to the inquiry, "Who is this God whom you worship in secret, without ceremonies, without images, temples, or altars?" "He it is whose breath gives life to every thing which exists: should he withdraw his breath, all would sink to nothing. You cannot speak without bearing testimony of him: thy very breath bears testimony of him, and yet ye know him not. This happens through the blindness of your soul, the stupidity of your heart. God might be seen by you, if the eye of your soul were open. All have eyes; but the eyes of some are darkened, that they cannot see the light of the sun: but it follows not thence that the sun shines not. The blind may blame themselves and their own eyes only. So, O man, the eyes of thy soul are darkened by sin. The man must have his soul pure like a clear mirror. If there be sin in man, it is like dust on a mirror. Such

a man cannot see God. But whenever thou wilt, thou canst be healed. Give thyself to the Physician, and he will open the eyes of thy soul and heart. Who is this Physician? God, who by his word heals and makes alive."<sup>1</sup>

#### § 5. THEIR REVERENCE FOR THE WORD OF GOD.

No trait of the primitive Christians was more remarkable than their profound reverence for the Scriptures, and their diligent study of them. The word of God, dwelling in them richly and abounding, was their meditation all the day long. Those who could read never went abroad without taking some part of the Bible with them. The women, in their household labours, wore some portion of the sacred roll hanging about their necks; and the men made it the companion of their toils in the field and the workshop. Morning, noon, and night, they read it at their meals. By recitals of the narratives of sacred history, by constant reading, by paraphrase, by commentary, and by sacred song, they taught the Scriptures diligently unto their children; talking of these heavenly themes when they sat in their house, when they walked by the way, when they laid themselves down, and when they rose up.

One has related, with great delight, that he never sat at meat with Origen, A. D. 225, but one of the company read to the other. They never retired to rest without first reading in the Bible. So diligent were they in this divine employment, that "prayer succeeded the reading of the word, and the reading of the word to prayer."

It was Augustin's habit also always to have the Scriptures read at the table. "Let our conversation be of heavenly things," says Chrysostom; "let some take the Holy Scriptures, and, calling together all who may be at home, let him quicken them by the Divine word; and not them only, but also his own heart."<sup>1</sup> Basil, after devoting himself for some time to polite literature, abandoned all such pursuits and devoted himself for thirteen years solely to the diligent reading and study of God's word.<sup>2</sup> Theodosius the younger, A. D. 450, was accustomed to rise early and, in company with his sisters, to sing responsively hymns together in praise to God. The Holy Scriptures he could readily repeat by heart; and used to discourse with bishops at court on scriptural subjects, as though he were himself an aged bishop.<sup>3</sup>

Though the manuscripts of the Scriptures were so dear as to be



beyond the reach of many, and when multitudes who were converted to Christianity were unable to read, even under these inconveniences, many private Christians could repeat the Holy Scriptures by heart. Valens, a venerable old man, deacon of the church at Jerusalem, had so entirely given himself up to the study of God's word, "that he did not require to read them if he undertook at any time to repeat any part of the Scriptures."<sup>4</sup> Another of these martyrs of Palestine, though unacquainted with letters, had become intimately acquainted with the sacred oracles by inviting Christian friends to his house to read to him the word of God. Eusebius also relates the martyrdom of another, who, though he had some time before been deprived of his eyes by his tormentors, had the sacred books so engraven on his memory that, "whenever he wished to produce any passage, whether from the law or the prophets, or the apostles, or the historical parts, or the gospels, he could repeat and produce it, as from a treasury of learning, whenever he pleased. I confess that I myself was astonished when I saw the man standing in the midst of a large multitude and repeating certain parts of the Holy Scriptures. For, as far as I had opportunity only to hear his voice, I thought that he was reading, as is usual in the congregations; but when I came near, and saw all the others standing around with sound vision, and he alone without eyes, raising his mind and pronouncing, as a kind of prophet, the sacred Scriptures, I could not but glorify and praise God."<sup>5\*</sup>

#### § 6. THEIR PRAYERFULNESS.

"BEHOLD, he prayeth!" was the simple exclamation that announced the conversion of the great apostle of the Gentiles; and the same is the most comprehensive characteristic of the primitive Christian. The men of that age were pre-eminently men of prayer. They prayed always with all prayer and supplication. Three times, at nine, at twelve, and three, they prayed. This hour for their stated devotions returned according to the Jewish custom, though they acknowledged no prescribed hour of prayer, but taught that men ought to pray at all times and in every place. Especially, they began and ended the day with prayer. "Early in the morning, as we arise from our beds," says Cyprian, "will we by our prayers give thanks for the resurrection of Christ, praying that, as the day has returned to enlighten the earth, so Christ would return to shine into our hearts by his grace."

\* See note page 632.

At their meals they religiously sought the blessing of God, and gave thanks at the close of them for the blessings received. At the table they frequently enlivened the repast with sacred songs or pertinent passages of Scripture. "The refreshment and sustenance of the spirit," says Tertullian, "must precede that of the body—the heavenly before the earthly."

The primitive Christians were also accustomed to begin and end their customary occupations with prayer, silent or audible. The various agricultural pursuits, sowing, reaping, harvesting, were begun and ended with prayer: so on laying the foundation of a house, or beginning to occupy it; on going on a journey, or even to a bath; on forming a new relation, or parting with a friend, or addressing to him a letter, they indulged in prayer. They prayed indeed always, by prayer and supplication making known their requests to God, with thanksgiving for every blessing of his hand; and on important occasions of general interest, such as the preservation of some valuable life or deliverance from persecution, public prayers and thanksgiving were offered by the assembled church.

Prayer was to these Christians a quickening spirit from above, ever drawing forth the soul in heavenly aspirations after God. "The whole life," says Origen, "should be sustained by continued prayer unto God; so that each particular prayer should be only a certain portion of one only prayer which pervades a Christian's life."<sup>1</sup> To the same effect is the language of Clement of Alexandria and of Tertullian, † 218: "Though men may appoint specific seasons for prayer, the advanced Christian, all his life long, strives by prayer to bind himself to God."<sup>2</sup> "We weary heaven with the importunity of our prayers, and reach the ear of God."<sup>3</sup> Such habitual intercourse with heaven shed a sanctifying influence over their whole life, and fed, like a perpetual spring, the streams of Christian piety and activity for which they were so remarkable. Prayer was to them a spiritual sacrifice from the altar of the heart, which, like the fire on the Jewish altar kindled from on high, was to be kept burning there. Thus they prayed without ceasing. Clement of Alexandria beautifully expresses this ideal of a devout Christian: "He prays in every place, but not openly, to be seen of men. He prays in every situation—in his walks for recreation, in his intercourse with others, in silence, in reading, in all rational pursuits; and, though he is only thinking upon God in the little

chamber of the soul, and calling upon his Father with silent aspirations, God is near him and with him while he is yet speaking."

### § 7. STEADFAST PROFESSION OF THEIR RELIGION.

By such a profession their religious principle was subjected to a severe test. Bonds, imprisonment, and death, in every form that ingenuity could devise or malice inflict, not only everywhere awaited them, but the scorn and derision of men, the hatred of their own kindred, "the world's dread laugh," and the sundering of the sacred ties of friendship were often a trial of their faith more severe than the rack, the cross, the stake, or the lion's den, to which they were exposed. Despised and rejected by their own kindred, they were shut out from the sacred charities of home, to suffer the loss of all things for Christ's sake. Defamed, as alike debased in principle and degraded in morals, they were charged with every vice, suspected of every crime, and persecuted unto death for every imaginable offence. "If the Tiber arises against the walls of the city, or the Nile does not overflow its banks; if drought or rain occur, earthquake, or famine, or pestilence, the cry is at once, 'Away with the Christians to the lions.'"<sup>1</sup> What a warfare for the soldiers of the cross of Christ,—what constancy, what firmness, to stand fast without wavering against such assaults, and witness a good profession! What faith, what zeal, what fearlessness of death, what holy boldness, to endure that great fight of afflictions to which the Christian's profession called him! But his feet were shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. He had put on the whole armour of God, and thus was enabled to withstand in the evil day.

The earliest Christian apologists unitedly affirm the constancy of the Christians in their profession of their religion. Justin Martyr, in reply to the slanderous imputations of Trypho the Jew, says, "As for us who have received the religion of the Holy Jesus, yourselves know very well that there is none throughout the world that is able to fright us out of our profession. Nay, the more these things happen to us, the faster others flock over to the name of Jesus, and become pious and devout followers of Christ; it being with us, in this case, as with a vine, which, pruned and trimmed and having its excrescences lopped off, puts forth more fruitful and flourishing branches." "But of our great love of an eternal and pure life, we desire to converse with God, the Father and Creator of all things; and hasten to confess, inasmuch as we believe and are sure

that such as show by their works that they follow God and earnestly long to converse with him in that world where no evil can assail them, shall be able to attain these blessings."<sup>2</sup> "No one is ashamed, none is sorry, save that he had not long before become a Christian. If he is informed against, he glories in the charge; if accused, he makes no defence; if questioned, he confesses even of his own accord; if condemned, he returns thanks."<sup>3</sup> Again: "We declare and openly profess, in the midst of all your tortures; even while torn and bleeding, we proclaim aloud that we worship God through Christ."<sup>4</sup>

These Christians had learned to "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; being in nothing terrified by their adversaries." Even a secret, disguised faith in Christ did not satisfy their obligations to him. It was not witnessing a good confession. It is related of Victorinus, a rhetorician of Rome in the fourth century, of such notoriety as to have obtained a public statue, but a zealous defender of paganism, that, on being convinced by reading the Holy Scriptures, he came to Simplician, and privately professed himself a Christian. This profession Simplician refused to receive, unless he would publicly avow it in the church. "What," says Victorinus, "do the walls, then, make Christians?" Unwilling to disoblige his distinguished friends, who would be offended with him, he continually returned this answer as often as the other urged a public profession, until, fearing that he should be denied before the holy angels if he should longer deny Christ before men, he said, "Let us go to the church, I will now be a Christian." Here it was proposed to him to make a profession of his faith and receive baptism before a private assembly, which he utterly refused, affirming that it were unreasonable for him to be ashamed to confess his hopes of salvation publicly before the people, while he publicly professed his character as a rhetorician daily before the people. This act occasioned great joy to the church, while it caused equal surprise and wonder in Rome.<sup>5</sup>

The firmness of the venerable Polycarp, in persecution unto death, is known to all. Urged by the chief officer to pay religious honours to the emperor, he mildly replies, "I shall not do as you advise me." "Swear, curse Christ, and I release you." "Sixty and eight years have I served him, and he has done me nothing but good; how, then, can I curse him, my Lord and my Saviour." At the stake, when they were about to bind him, he said, "Leave me as I am. He who has strengthened me to encounter the flames

will enable me to stand firm at the stake." Before the fire was lighted, he prayed, "Lord God Almighty, Father of thy beloved Son Jesus Christ, through whom we have received from thee the knowledge of thyself; God of angels and of the whole creation; of the human race and of the just that live in thy presence; I praise thee that thou hast judged me worthy of this day and of this hour, to take part in the number of the witnesses in the cross of thy Christ."

Volumes have been written, and yet the half has not been told of the noble army of martyrs, who, fearless of them that can kill the body only, calmly braved the terrors of the rack, of the stake, of the cross, of savage beasts and more savage men, in the steadfast profession of their faith. Holy women not a few, in attestation of their faith, firmly encountered every indignity, more terrible than death, which ingenuity could devise and malice inflict; and mothers themselves followed their own children to the stake, to encourage them, in these fiery trials of their faith, to maintain without wavering the integrity of their profession. "My son, my son," exclaimed a Christian mother, as they were leading him to execution, "have the living God in thy heart,—be steadfast. There is nothing fearful in that death which so surely conducts thee to life. Let thy heart be above. My son, look up to Him who dwells in heaven. To-day, thy life is not taken from thee, but transfigured to a better. By a blessed exchange, my son, thou art this day passing to the life of heaven."

The father of Perpetua, at Carthage, A. D. 202, threw himself at her feet, presenting her own infant son, whom she loved with more than a mother's fondness, and, frantic with grief, implored her to desist from her profession which would bring down his gray hairs in sorrow to the grave and devote her first-born to an untimely death; but she firmly withstood the impassioned importunities of parental anguish, and the mute, but more persuasive pleadings of maternal fondness for her poor babe, declared herself still a Christian, and calmly braved the terrors of the lion's den.



## CHAPTER III.

### THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS IN THE FAMILY.

#### § 1. THEIR MARRIAGE RELATIONS.

THE primitive Christians observed with great care the rule of the apostle forbidding unequal marriages with unbelievers. Tertullian declares such marriages to be an offence inconsistent with the Christian profession, the punishment of which should be excommunication.<sup>1</sup> Cyprian, Augustine, Ambrose, and Jerome are almost equally severe against such marriages. They were also frequently the subject of censure by councils, under different penalties of suspension or excommunication.

But the marriage relation between believers was honoured as the means of mutual edification and happiness. "How intimate," exclaims Tertullian, "the union between believers! their hopes, their aspirations, their desires, all the same. They are one in faith and in the service of their Lord, as they are also in flesh and in heart. In mutual concord they read the Scriptures, and fast and pray together, aiding, sustaining each other by mutual instruction and encouragement. They go in company to the house of the Lord, they sit together at his table. In persecution and in want they bear their mutual burdens, and participate in each other's joys. They live together in mutual confidence and in the enjoyment of each other's society. In the freedom of mutual confidence, they administer to the sick, relieve the needy, distribute their alms, and each freely engages in all his religious duties without concealment from the other. Unitedly they offer their prayers to God and sing his praise, knowing no rivalry but in these acts of devotion. In such scenes of domestic bliss Christ rejoices and adds his peace. To two so united he grants his presence; and where he is no evil can abide."<sup>2</sup>

Such scenes of domestic enjoyment were the result only of Christian union and fellowship, unknown to pagan families; neither could such purity, peace, and joy be expected to result from the union of believers with unbelievers. "Who that is yet a pagan

would accompany his wife from street to street in search of the brethren in the house of strangers and in the humblest abodes of the poor? Who, without jealousy, could allow her to frequent the Lord's supper, a mystery to him unknown, and an object of suspicion? Who would allow her to enter secretly into the prison to kiss the martyr's chains? Or where would a brother from a foreign city, or a stranger find entertainment? If any thing is to be given in charity, the granary, store, and cellar of the house are closed."<sup>3</sup> "What," he exclaims in the same connection, "what shall her husband sing to her, or she to her husband? Would she wish to hear any thing from the theatre or the tavern? What mention is there of God, what invocation of Christ? Where is the nourishment for faith by repeating portions of Scripture in conversation? Where the refreshment of the spirit; where the Divine blessing?"

## § 2. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN.

THE tender solicitude of these early Christians for the religious instruction of their children is one of their most beautiful characteristics. They taught them even at the earliest dawn of intelligence, the sacred names of God and the Saviour. They sought to lead the infant minds of their children up to God, by familiar narratives from Scripture, of Joseph, of young Samuel, of Josiah, and of the holy child Jesus. The history of the patriarchs and prophets, apostles and holy men, whose lives are narrated in the sacred volume, were the nursery tales with which they sought to form the tender minds of their children. As the mind of the child expanded, the parents made it their sacred duty and delightful task daily to exercise him in the recital of select passages of Scripture relating to the doctrines and duties of religion. The Bible was the entertainment of the fireside. It was the first, the last, the only school-book almost, of the child; and sacred psalmody the only song with which his infant cry was hushed as he was lulled to rest on his mother's arm. The sacred song, and the rude melody of its music, were, from the earliest periods of Christian antiquity, an important means of impressing the infant heart with sentiments of piety, and of imbuing the susceptible minds of the young with the knowledge and the faith of the Scripture. Even in the earliest period of Christianity, there were those who, like our divine Watts in modern times, "condescended to lay aside the scholar, the phi-

losopher, and the wit, to write little poems of devotion adapted to the wants and capacities of children."

The Christian fathers abundantly insist on the duty of giving daily instructions in the family. "Speak of divine things not only in the social circle, but in the family—the husband with the wife—the father with his child; and very frequently renew the subject. Let no man affirm that the child needs not to be addressed on these topics; for they must be discoursed of, not only sometimes, but at all times." "You must immediately begin to bring up your children in the nurture of the Divine word."<sup>1</sup> "Leave to your children God for their inheritance, and you leave them an inestimable treasure. Be it our effort and our desire, then, not to leave to them an inheritance, but to leave them in the possession of personal piety. Preach the name and doctrine of Christ on all occasions. Let every master of a family know that this solemn duty rests upon him in regard to all his house."<sup>2</sup> Constantine the Great, though he appointed men of the most approved piety to be the teachers of his children, was himself their instructor in the knowledge of divine things, to lead them to immortal blessedness.<sup>3</sup> Origen was first and chiefly taught by his father the knowledge of divine things, and made familiar with the sacred Scriptures, before he was permitted to give attention to profane literature; and, notwithstanding his vast attainments in every branch of knowledge, he ever continued to make the Scriptures his chief study. Even in his earliest childhood, he was required to commit to memory and to repeat some portion of the sacred Scriptures.<sup>4</sup>

The writings of the early Christians are filled with expressions of the deepest solicitude for the piety of their children. The mother of Augustine bewailed the early impiety of her son "with tears and sighs more bitter and abundant than those of a mother for the death of her child; for she looked upon him as already dead in spirit. But the Lord finally heard her prayer, and refused not her tears, for she gave herself wholly unto prayer." When bewailing his hardened impiety to a Christian friend, he said to her, "Go in peace; it is impossible that a child of so many tears should be lost."<sup>5</sup>

"Children," says Jerome, "are a trust committed to us of the Lord, and, therefore, to be trained up with the greatest care. The nearer they are allied to us in the flesh, the more impressive is our responsibility."<sup>6</sup> Polycarp, the venerable disciple of John, earnestly exhorts parents to bring up their children in the know-

ledge and fear of God.<sup>7</sup> These brief examples may indicate the pious care of these Christians for the religious education and the conversion of their children. Their great desire and constant endeavour was to train up their children in the fear of God, to conduct their education at home, to withdraw them as much as possible from temptation, and to make them so happy in their own quiet homes that they should neither desire the noisy amusements of the world nor subject themselves to its temptations. The children found their happiness in their parents, and the parents in their children. Such families were the nurseries of pure, consistent, efficient churches; such Christians were the lights of the world, which could not be hid; the salt of the earth, which never lost its savour.

### § 3. THE DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES OF THE FAMILY.

THESE early Christians were examples of devout piety in their families. There, at the domestic altar, they fed the sacred flame of devotion, which burned in their bosom with a triumphant, deathless flame. There they formed and maintained the spirit of a pure, deep, and earnest piety. Every master of a family fulfilled, within the walls of his own house, the office of private pastor, keeping up in it a regular course of reading, prayer, and private instruction to all the members of his household. Thus, every private house was, in the words of Chrysostom, a church to itself.

The influence of pious mothers was also particularly remarkable over their children. Gregory of Nazianzen ascribed his conversion to the piety of his mother, Nonna. His brother Cæsarius, by the same means, was enabled to maintain an exemplary life of piety in the court of the emperor. Their sister Gorgonia also religiously walked in the steps of her mother, and was instrumental in the conversion of her husband and training her children and her nephews in the ways of piety. Theodoret ascribed his conversion, under God, to his pious mother; and Basil the Great, to his grandmother Emmilia and to his sister Macrina. Augustin and Chrysostom, also the greatest lights of the ancient church, were indebted to their pious mothers for those instructions that brought them to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus.

The several members of a Christian family were accustomed to rise very early in the morning and address their thoughts to God by silent ejaculations, by calling to mind familiar passages of Scrip-

ture, and by secret prayer. Clement of Alexandria, A. D. 188, was accustomed, whenever he awoke, to call to mind the words of Christ; and often anticipated the dawning of the day in these devout exercises. "One must arise," says Basil the Great, "before the twilight of the morning, to greet with prayer the coming day." "Let the sun at his rising find us with the word of God in hand."<sup>1</sup> "Let the day begin with prayer."<sup>2</sup> "Soon as the day returns, and before leaving his chamber, the Christian should address his prayer to his Saviour; and, before resuming his daily labour, begin the work of righteousness."<sup>3</sup> "Let the child be accustomed, early in the morning, to offer prayer and praise to God: and at evening again, when the day is past and gone, let him end his labour by bringing his evening offering to the Lord."<sup>4</sup>

After their private devotions, the family met for united prayer, which was uniformly accompanied with the reading of the Scriptures. The recital of such doctrinal and practical sentiments as might best fortify them against the prevailing scandals and heresies of the times, constituted also, as it would seem, part of their devotional exercises. In the family, as in all their devotions, the primitive Christians delighted to sing their sacred songs.

At the table they reverently sought the blessing of God. Several of these examples of prayer before meals are given at length in the fathers. Here also they rehearsed some portions of Scripture and sang praise to God; a custom which Clement of Alexandria and Chrysostom earnestly recommend. The meal being ended, they concluded with prayer, giving thanks for the blessings received, and supplicating a continuance of the Divine mercy. "As the body requires daily sustenance," says Chrysostom, "so the soul needs to be refreshed with spiritual food, that it may be strengthened for its warfare against the flesh."

The day was closed by devotions, renewed in much the same manner as in the morning. Such was the pious care with which these Christians ordered their households in the fear of the Lord. Chrysostom made it the first duty of the master of the house "to seek so to speak and so to act that the spiritual good of the whole household might be promoted; and of the mistress of the family, while she oversees her domestic affairs, especially to see that all act in the fear of God and with reference to the kingdom of heaven."<sup>5</sup>

There is extant a representation of one of these sacred scenes of domestic worship in the families of the primitive Christians; a



view of which may fitly conclude our remarks on this subject. It is a large sarcophagus, which Münter, with the approbation also of Dorner,<sup>6</sup> refers to the middle of the second century, on which is exhibited the religious worship of a Christian family. On one side of this sarcophagus are three women standing around a younger female who is playing on a lyre: on the right side stand four men with apparent rolls of music in hand, from which they are singing. This interesting monument indicates not only the existence at that early period of a collection of sacred music, but the use of that delightful portion of religious worship, sacred psalmody, in the devotions of the family.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS IN SOCIAL LIFE.

#### § 1. THE HOSPITALITY OF THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS.

THEIR oneness of spirit and mutual love one toward another united them together as one great family. Each saw in another believer in Christ, of whatever clime, or colour, or condition, a friend and brother, and hastened to extend to him the kind offices of hospitality, confidence, and affection, as to a member of his own household. "Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Every such opportunity of serving Christ by services to the humblest of his followers was eagerly sought, and deeply lamented when lost. "We give ourselves to hospitality, and receive all with a friendly and joyful welcome; for we fear to have it said, as in the instance of Joseph and Mary, that 'there was no room for them in the inn;' or lest our Lord should say, 'I was a stranger, and ye took me not in.'"<sup>1</sup> In their readiness to entertain strangers, they so vied with each other that their complaint often was that the guests could not accept the hospitalities offered to them.

Tertullian urges it as one strong objection to the marriage of a Christian woman with an unbeliever, that "she could neither give

the kiss of charity to a Christian brother, nor wash the feet of the saints, nor offer to them either food or drink; but must, if she would honour them, conceal them in the house of another, because of her husband's unwillingness to gratify her in this particular." Clement of Rome, contemporary with the apostles, commends the noble hospitality of the Corinthians as one of their excellent virtues. "Who that sojourned among you has not experienced the firmness of your faith and its fruitfulness in all good works? Who has not admired your Christian temper and moderation? Who has not proclaimed your habitual and noble hospitality."<sup>2</sup> Polycarp, the venerable martyr, when arrested by his persecutors to be led away to death, gently addressed them, and immediately ordered a table to be spread for their entertainment, and urged them freely to partake of the refreshments, while he only asked of them the favour of one hour, that he might pass this without interruption in prayer. After this, he quietly resigned himself to their hands. Lucian, a little more than a century later, relates of Peregrinus, that eccentric impostor, that, on professing to have become a convert to Christianity, he was received with all confidence by the Christians, fully entertained by them, promoted to the office of presbyter among them, and so liberally supplied as to abound in all things, until his hypocrisy became apparent, when he was expelled from their communion.

Cyprian, A. D. 250, set apart from his yearly income a certain portion to be expended in offices of hospitality; and the same may be affirmed of Basil, Athanasius, Chrysostom, Augustin, and many others. Some built, at their own expense, houses of entertainment for strangers. Of one, it is said that he was but a guest in his own house, for his house was filled with strangers and with the poor; of another, that he was the entertainer of all the saints; of a third, that he was the servant of strangers; of another, that he was given to hospitality; and yet again of another, that, by word and works, he diligently sought to administer to the sick and to strangers.

This hospitality, proceeding from love unfeigned and a pure heart, was so remarkable as to gain the notice of the apostate Julian, who even ordered similar rites of hospitality and of kindness to the poor to be observed, in imitation of the Christians, whom he so much despised.<sup>3</sup> To the unconverted, it seemed an inexplicable mystery that Christians should thus be on terms of the greatest intimacy with each other whenever they should meet. It

was alleged against them that they formed a secret society, known to one another by some sign or watchword. They knew nothing of that inward communion of spirit, that fellowship and brotherly love which bound the believers together by ties independent of all natural relations or national distinctions, and which were manifested by the boundless hospitality and generous affection with which they opened their hearts and their houses alike to all, of whatever condition, who love the sacred name of Christ.

Whenever a stranger arrived at any town, he repaired to the church, in or about which liberal entertainment was provided for him. Seldom was this done at public charge, for the families vied with each other which should have the privilege of entertaining the Christian stranger at their own homes. When, in process of time, this generous, unsuspecting hospitality was abused by unprincipled and designing men, it became customary for one, on going upon a journey, to take a letter of recommendation from the minister of his church, which admitted him to the confidence and fellowship of his brethren.

Such acquaintances were always carefully improved by them, as affording opportunities for religious conversation and prayer. Prayer, indeed, on the arrival of a guest, was a uniform part of the hospitality of the times. In the opinion of many, the love-feast was a part of the Christian entertainment of the guest; an account of which may fitly conclude this article. The narrative is abridged from Tertullian.<sup>4</sup>

“We, who are of one mind and one soul, hesitate not to communicate what we possess one with another. What wonder is it, then, if, maintaining such good-will towards each other, we should feast together. Our supper sufficiently shows its meaning by its very name, *ἀγάπη*, which, in Greek, signifies *love*. The cause of our feast is honourable, and the regulations of it consistent with the duties of religion. It admits of nothing indecorous, nothing indecent. We sit not down until prayer to God be made, as the first portion of the banquet. We eat as much as will satisfy hunger, and drink as much as is useful for the temperate. We commit no excess; for we remember that, by night as well as by day, we are to make our prayers to God. Our conversation is that of men who are conscious that the Lord hears them. After water for the hands is brought in, and the lights, we are invited to sing to God, according as each one can propose a subject from the Holy Scriptures, or of his own composing. Prayer, in like manner, concludes the feast. Thence we

depart, not to join a crowd of disturbers of the peace, nor to follow a troop of brawlers, nor to break out into any excess of wanton riot; but to maintain the same staid and modest demeanour, as if we were departing, not from a supper, but from a lecture.”\*

## § 2. THE UNITY, PEACE, AND LOVE OF THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS TOWARDS ONE ANOTHER.

NEVER has the great law of love, one towards another, which Christ gave as a “new commandment,” the sum of his gospel to men, been more happily exemplified than in the earliest periods of the church. This characteristic of Christians of that age was the first to engage the notice of their enemies. Once hateful and hating one another, such was now their affection towards each other, that they compelled all men to acknowledge and admire, however they might hate the change. “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love to one another.”

“We,” says Justin Martyr, “who once loved above all things the gain of money and possessions, now bring all that we have into one common stock, and give a part to every one that needs. We, who hated and killed one another, and permitted not those of another nation, on account of their different customs, to live with us under the same roof, now, since the appearing of Christ, live at the same table, and pray for our enemies, and endeavour to persuade those who unjustly hate us, that they, also living after the excellent institutions of Christ, may have good hope with us to obtain the same blessings with God, the Lord of all.”<sup>1</sup> To the same effect is also the testimony of Tertullian. After detailing instances of the charity and mutual affection of Christians, he says: “Even the working of a charity like this is by some made a cause of censure against us. ‘See,’ say they, ‘how these Christians love one another, and how ready each one is to die for another!’ We acknowledge ourselves to be even your brethren, having one nature as our common mother; although ye have forfeited your title to be

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\* To this account of the domestic festivities of the primitive Christians, we subjoin the delightful representation made by Cyprian: *Quoniam feriata nunc quies, ac tempus est otiosum quicquid, inclinatio jam sole, in vesperam diei superest; ducamus hanc diem læti; nec sit vel hora convivii gratiæ cœlestis immunis. Sonet psalmos convivium sobrii, et, ut tibi tenax memoria est, vox canora, aggredere hoc munus ex more. Magis carissimos pascas si sit nobis spiritualis auditio; prolectet aures religiosa mulcedo.*—*Ad Donat.*

considered human beings, because ye are bad brethren. With how much more reason, then, are ye both called and esteemed brethren, who have all recognised one Father, even God; who have all drunk of one spirit of holiness; who have all trembled with astonishment, when born, as it were, from the same womb of ignorance into the same light of truth."<sup>2</sup>

Thus Christians recognised each other as truly brethren, and dwelled together in the delightful harmony of kindred in Christ. "Behold, how we love one another; but mutual hatred between us is impossible. We denominate each other as brethren, the offspring of one Father, partakers of the same faith, and fellow-heirs of the same hope."<sup>3</sup> The writings of the early Christians are replete with the most endearing demonstrations of that ardent affection by which they were bound together in the bonds of the Spirit. Difference of opinion and of usage did not then divide them; nor had the touch of heresy, that torch of hell, which since has so inflamed the angry passions of the church, yet lighted its fires. Polycarp of Smyrna and Victor of Rome parted as brethren, each to adhere to his own faith, after labouring long and earnestly to convict the other of error. Justin Martyr says of the heretics of his age, "We are brethren still. Our prayer is to one God; our faith is in the same Saviour. We listen to the same gospel. We keep the same feast. We sing the same divine songs. We join in the same doxology; and unitedly respond Amen."<sup>4</sup>

Towards their fallen brethren also, who, in the fiery trials of their faith, swerved from their own steadfastness, these Christians exercised peculiar tenderness and charity; seeking, by every means, to win them back to Christ and to a firmer profession of their faith in him. Many a fallen brother, by such Christian kindness, was recovered, and assisted, through grace, to witness a good profession. But when one persisted in hopeless apostasy, he was finally rejected from the communion; not in bitterness, but in sorrow, and the church bewailed him as dead, as one mourns for the loss of the dearest earthly friend.

### § 3. THE BENEVOLENCE OF THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS.

THEY were men of enlarged philanthropy. Their hearts not only burned with fervent charity one toward another, but swelled with the wide wish of benevolence towards all men. The apostle of the Gentiles earnestly enjoined his converts to remember the



poor; he taught them to provide a common fund for this purpose by weekly contributions of all, as God had prospered them, (1 Cor. xvi. 2;) but himself, in the wide range of his missionary tours, became the almoner of the charity of the churches to afflicted saints in foreign countries. The custom, in these primitive times, seems to have been for every one, on the Lord's day, at the close of public worship, to bring to the notice of the assembly the case of the poor, the aged, the widow, or the orphan, of whose necessities he had any knowledge; and forthwith provision was made for such from the public fund created by their weekly contributions. This custom is distinctly specified by Justin Martyr in the middle of the second century, and by Tertullian at the close of it, as is indicated in the following paragraphs:

"Of those who have abundance and are willing, each at his pleasure gives what he thinks fit. What is collected is deposited with the president, who succours the fatherless and the widows, and those who are in bonds, and the strangers who are sojourning among us. In a word, he provides for all who are in need."<sup>1</sup>

"What is collected in the public chest is no dishonourable sum, as if it belonged to a purchased religion. Every one makes a small contribution on a certain day, or when he chooses; provided only he is willing and able; for no one is compelled; all is voluntary. The amount is, as it were, a common fund of piety, since it is expended, not in feasting or drinking or indecent excess, but in feeding and burying the poor, and in supporting children of either sex who have neither parents nor means of subsistence, and old men now confined to their houses and incapable of work; in relieving those who have been shipwrecked; and, if there are any in the mines, or in the islands, or in prison, provided they suffer for the cause of God's religion, they are the recipients of the bounty to which their confession entitles them. But even the working of a charity like this is made, by some, a cause of censure against us."<sup>2</sup>

Numerous instances remain on record of the boundless charity of the early Christians, of which, in this boasted age of Christian benevolence, we have no parallel. Cyprian, A. D. 250, against the remonstrance of Christian friends, sold the estate which he inherited, to supply the necessities of the poor. At another time, by his own indefatigable efforts, he raised, from his persecuted, afflicted flock, the extraordinary sum of four thousand dollars to redeem some Christian captives of Numidia, and forwarded it with a letter to the churches of Numidia, full of Christian sympathy and ten-

derness.<sup>3</sup> "Cæsarius, St. Basil's brother," near the close of the fourth century, "made only this short will when he died. 'I will that my estate be given to the poor.' " Nazianzen reports of his father, that he was so kind to the poor that he did not only bestow the surplusage of his estate upon them, but even part of what was reserved for necessary uses. Of his mother he affirms, that an ocean of wealth would not have filled her unsatisfied desire of doing good; and that he had often heard her say, that if it were lawful, she could willingly have sold herself and children to have expended the price upon the uses of the poor: of his sister Gorgonia, that she was immensely liberal. "Job-like, her gate was open to every stranger. She was eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, and a mother to orphans. Her estate was as common to the poor and as much at their service as every one's is to himself, dispensing and scattering abroad; and, according to the counsel of our Saviour, 'laying up her treasure in heaven.'"<sup>4</sup>

The church at Rome, in the age of Cornelius, A. D. 250, supported more than fifteen hundred widows, besides the afflicted and needy.<sup>5</sup> In the preceding century it was, as it had been from the beginning, their practice to do good to all the brethren, in every way, and to send contributions to needy churches in every city, thus refreshing the needy in their wants, and sending needful supplies to the brethren condemned to the mines.<sup>6</sup> The church at Antioch, though its revenues were small, in the fifth century, daily maintained more than three thousand widows and maids, besides providing for its clergy, for strangers, for lepers, and for such as were in bonds.<sup>7</sup>

A better idea cannot, perhaps, be given of the sentiments of early Christians on this subject than is furnished by an incident which occurred in Rome. The liberality shown to the poor had led a Roman officer, in the days of persecution under Decius, A. D. 251, to believe that Christians had great treasures at their command. Laurentius, one of the deacons or guardians of the poor, was commanded by the Roman prefect to deliver up the treasures of the church. He demanded three days to comply with the requisition. In that time he collected from the whole city all the poor taken care of by Christian benevolence; and, having assembled, in the courts and porches of one of their churches, the immense multitude of the aged, infirm, lame, blind, diseased, destitute poor, who received constant aid from the hands of Christians, he called upon the prefect and said, "Come, see the treasure of our God; you

shall see a great court full of vessels of gold, and talents are heaped up in the porches." The prefect followed, and was shown the assembled poor. "Behold the treasures I promised you. I add to these the widows and orphans; these are our pearls and precious stones—the crown of the church. Take this wealth for Rome, for the emperor, and for yourself."

But the benevolence of these Christians ended not with almsgiving. It was manifested no less in their personal attentions to the poor, the distressed, the sick, the dying, and the dead. In these deeds of charity and walks of usefulness they passed much of their time, and often perilled their lives in their attentions to the sick who were infected with some noisome pestilence, and to the dead who had died of contagious diseases. Many examples to this effect might be given, of which the following must suffice, presenting the benevolence of the Christians in contrast with the barbarous neglect of the pagans of Alexandria, during the prevalence of the plague in that city:—"That pestilence appeared to the heathen as the most dreadful of all things,—as that which left them no hope. Not so, however, did it seem to us, but only a peculiar and practical trial. The greater part of our people, in the abundance of their brotherly love, did not spare themselves; and, mutually attending to each other, they cheerfully attended to the sick without fear, and ministered to them for the sake of Christ. Many of them died, after their care had restored others from the plague to health. The best among our brethren, priests and deacons, and some who were celebrated among the laity, died in this manner; and such a death, the fruit of great piety and strong faith, is hardly inferior to martyrdom. Many who took the bodies of their Christian brethren into their hands and bosoms, closed their mouth and eyes, and buried them with every attention, soon followed them in death. But with the heathen, matters stood quite differently: at the first symptom of sickness, they drove a man from their society, they tore themselves away from their dearest connections, they threw the half dead into the streets, and left thousands unburied,—endeavouring by all the means in their power to escape contagion, which, notwithstanding all their contrivances, it was very difficult to accomplish."<sup>8</sup>

Eusebius, again, describes the dreadful famine and pestilence which prevailed in the East during a violent persecution under the emperor Maximin, A. D. 308, and the unwearied exertions of the Christians, in the midst of their persecutions, in behalf of the

starving, plague-stricken multitude. "Immense numbers were dying in the cities, still more in the country and villages, so that now the vast population in the interior was almost entirely swept away; nearly all being suddenly destroyed by want of food and by pestilential disease. Many were anxious to sell their most valuable effects, to those better supplied, for the smallest quantity of food. Others, gradually spending all their possessions, were reduced to the last extreme of want. And some even chewing remnants of hay; and others, eating without distinction certain noxious herbs, miserably destroyed the constitution of the body. Also, some of the more honourable females throughout the cities, constrained by want to throw aside all shame, went into the public markets to beg, indicating the evidences of their former liberal education by the modesty of their countenances and the decency of their apparel. Some, indeed, wasted away to mere skeletons, stumbled hither and thither like dead shadows, trembling and tottering from excessive weakness and inability to stand; they fell down in the midst of the streets, where they lay stretched out, and only earnestly begged some one to hand them a little morsel of bread; then, drawing in their breath, with the last gasp they cried out, 'Hunger!' having only strength sufficient for this most painful cry. Some, however, of those that appeared better supplied, astonished at the great multitude of those begging, after giving vast quantities away, afterwards yielded to a harsh and inflexible disposition, expecting that they would soon suffer the same things with those begging of them. So that now, in the midst of the streets and lanes, the dead and naked bodies, cast out and lying for many days, presented a most painful spectacle to the beholders. Some, indeed, were already the food of dogs; on which account the survivors began to slay the dogs, lest, growing mad, they should devour men. The pestilence, in the mean time, did not the less prey upon every house and family; particularly those whom the famine, from their abundance of food, could not destroy—the wealthy, the rulers, generals, and vast numbers in office—who, as if they had been designedly left by the famine to the pestilence, were overtaken by a sudden, violent, and rapid death. All places, therefore, were filled with lamentation, in all streets, lanes, market-places, and highways. Nothing was to be seen but tears, with the accustomed flutes and funeral dirge. In this manner, death waged a desolating war with these two weapons—famine and pestilence—destroying whole families in a short time; so that now one could see two or three dead bodies



carried out at once. Such were the rewards of the pompous boasting of Maximinus, and of his edicts throughout the city against us. Then, also, the evidences of the zeal and piety of the Christians became manifest and obvious to all; for they were the only persons, in the midst of such distressing circumstances, that exhibited sympathy and humanity in their conduct. They continued the whole day, some in the care and burial of the dead, for numberless were they for whom there was none to care; others, collecting the multitude of those wasted by the famine throughout the city, distributed bread among all; so that the fact was cried abroad, and men glorified the God of the Christians, constrained as they were, by the facts, to acknowledge that these were the only really pious and the only real worshippers of God."<sup>9</sup>

#### § 4. THEIR EFFORTS FOR THE PROPAGATION OF CHRISTIANITY.

IN swift obedience to the great command which closed the ministry of our Lord, the apostles sped through the earth as angels of mercy to preach the gospel to every creature. Not counting his life dear to him, so he might fulfil his benevolent mission, each in turn laid down his life a cheerful sacrifice for the conversion of men. But the same self-denying, self-sacrificing spirit survived the apostles and animated the primitive ages of the church. Clement, contemporary and survivor of the apostles, appeals to the personal knowledge of the Romans and Corinthians, "how many among them had given themselves up into bonds, that they might free others. Many had sold themselves into bondage and received the price that they might feed others."<sup>1</sup>

Origen, against Celsus, in the third century, describes the earnestness of Christians to propagate their faith through the whole world; some of whom went up and down, not only through cities, but towns and villages, to bring over others to the true religion, often refusing to receive necessary accommodations from others; and, at other times, only accepting these when greater liberalities were offered. The efforts of Monica, the mother of Augustin, for the conversion of her husband and her son, are well known. To the latter she said, "I have no further hopes or desires, my son, in this world; I only desired to live to see you a Christian." To Emmilia, the grandmother of Basil the Great; to Nonna, the mother of Gregory Nazianzen, and to Arethusa, the mother of Chrysostom, the world was indebted, through grace, for those great



lights of the dark and degenerate ages in which they lived. Libanius, the celebrated heathen orator and instructor of Chrysostom, with reference to his mother, exclaimed, "What wives these Christians have?" And the pagans themselves, lamenting the loss of the splendid talents of Chrysostom by his conversion, complained that "the Christians had stolen him away." To such an extent did these Christians carry their self-denying efforts for the conversion of others, that some even sold themselves into voluntary slavery, as the means of bringing their masters to the knowledge of Christianity, who, on their conversion, restored again their Christian slaves to freedom.

Time would fail to enumerate all the different forms in which the benevolence of primitive Christians discovered itself. Some devoted large possessions to the gratuitous distribution of the Scriptures; some, in support of missionaries; some, to deeds of charity to the poor, the afflicted, or for the redemption of captives; and, when all other means failed, perilled their own lives in deeds of charity to others, and even sold themselves into captivity to redeem other captives from bondage.

#### § 5. AMUSEMENTS OF THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS.

EVERY man has certain customary means of enjoyment in those little intervals of leisure which occur in the busiest life. Every community offers some method of entertainment and recreation, according to the prevailing tastes and habits of their society; and these amusements of men and of society indicate, no less than their serious occupations, their character. The primitive Christians, when occupied neither with labours nor with the duties of religion, had, no doubt, like other men, their amusements. But neither their principles nor their social habits would allow them to join in many of the fashionable amusements of their day. Primitive Christianity was, indeed, exempt from that "sullenness against nature" and nature's God which characterized the stoical philosophy of antiquity, and which subsequently led to the follies of monkery. But its principles inculcate great strictness in regard to the pleasures of the world; and these principles of Christianity, contrasted with the degeneracy of the age, threw over its professors the air of great seriousness.

As a persecuted and despised people, they sought retirement and seclusion. Conscious that bonds, imprisonment, and death awaited

them, sorrowing for those who were languishing in prison or had died a martyr's death, the vanities of the world and the gayeties of convivial life had for them no charms.

Most of the amusements of the age were in some way connected with idolatrous ideas and ceremonies, or else were tainted with impurities and immoralities inconsistent with their religion. We, who live at a period when the tone of public sentiment is all in favour of the principles and practices of Christianity, cannot readily enter into the feelings of those who moved in a state of society where every element of nature was consecrated to the service of paganism, and the simplest and most innocent amusements could not be enjoyed without offence to all that is pure and holy.

These circumstances should be taken into account along with the religious seriousness and conscientiousness of Christians, in our estimate of their apparent austerity.

Minucius Felix, a Roman lawyer, a convert to Christianity, who died A. D. 208, makes Cæcilius, sustaining the heathen part of his dialogue, give the following graphic portraiture of the manners and life of Christians: "Fearful and anxious, you abstain from pleasures in which there is nothing indecorous; you visit no shows; you attend no pageants; you are seen at no public banquets; the sacred games, and food and drink used in the sacrifices, you abhor; you thus fear the gods whom you deny; you bind not your brows with garlands; you use no perfumes for the body; your aromatics you reserve for burials; you refuse even crowns of flowers to the sepulchres; pallid, trembling, you are fit objects of commiseration to our gods." In another place, he calls them "a people who fled the light, who hid themselves in darkness; mute in public, garrulous in corners."

The amusements of the theatre, the circus, pantomimic shows, tragedies, comedies, chariot and foot races, scenic exhibitions of every kind were discountenanced by these Christians, because much occurred there which violated the moral feelings of Christians and the decencies of Christian life. Moreover, an unholy spirit breathed in them—the frivolities which reigned there, "the hour-long pursuit of idle and vain objects," and the tumult and uproar which prevailed there, were viewed as incompatible with the seriousness of the Christian character. Then, again, these scenes were connected with idolatrous ideas and worship, and weaker Christians might be led back to heathenism. Even if otherwise innocent, they would refrain from every thing that might make their

brother to offend. On this principle, all trades and occupations which encouraged public vices, immoralities, or impieties, were disowned. Tertullian would not allow merchants to furnish commodities for adorning the temples, nor to sell spices for incense.

Dice and games of hazard of every kind, together with sedentary plays, were also condemned, as inconsistent with a Christian profession, and tending to form habits of idleness and profligacy.

It is hardly necessary to add, that all excessive ornament and costly apparel were likewise condemned, together with every thing that should gratify a vain ambition, excite sensual desires, or gratify a voluptuous disposition. "Tell me," says Apollonius, A. D. 180, "does a prophet dye his hair? Does he paint his eyelids? Does he delight in ornament? Does he play at dice? Does he take usury? Speak and say, are these things justifiable?" "What reason can you have," says Tertullian, "for going about in gay apparel, when you are removed from all with whom this is required? You do not go the round of the temples; you ask for no public shows; you have nothing to do with public festivals."

Clement of Alexandria, of the same age, in his *Pedagogue*, personates Christ as discoursing on the rules of living pertaining to meats, to drinks, to ornaments and dress, to expensive articles of luxury, in which he descends to great minuteness of detail; but allows only a decent consistency. He would not have Christians "wear a severe and morose countenance," but condemns all buffoonery, unseemly merriment, and noisy mirth; and comments with great severity upon "immodest speech." He enters minutely in the description of a lady's toilette. The "fine gentleman" of the day—the fop of Alexandria—and idlers "who lounge at the shops to gaze at the females as they pass," especially move his virtuous indignation. Some of the details to which he descends are curious enough; but the picture which he draws of the morals of the day, especially of female morals, is really appalling. But in the midst of this extreme degeneracy and corruption, he exhibits himself the champion of a pure and inflexible morality, based on a deep and earnest piety.

Let us not, however, imagine that the primitive Christians were sad and melancholy. All their history shows them to have been cheerful and happy. Free from cankering, corroding cares and guilty passions, they enjoyed peace of conscience and rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. They were eminently social. The sacred song, the harp, the lyre, and the exalted themes of Chris-

tian intercourse enlivened their pastimes; so that, in their quiet seclusion, they enjoyed a steady and tranquil flow of happiness and peace, with which no stranger could intermeddle. With a propriety which none else could claim, they could say—

“With us no melancholy void,  
No moment lingers unemployed  
Or unenjoyed below;  
Our weariness of life is gone,  
Who live to serve our God alone,  
And only Jesus know.”

## CHAPTER V.

### THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS IN THEIR RELATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT.

#### § 1. OF THEIR INTERCOURSE WITH SOCIETY.

THE primitive Christians at first, like their Divine Master, sought not the seclusion of the cloister. They affected no austerities. They mingled freely, as before their conversion, with society, and conformed to its customs in their occupations and pursuits, in their apparel, their mode of life, their domestic habits, their intervals of labour and repose, and in whatever was honourable, pure, and of good report. The mechanic wrought at his trade, the husbandman prosecuted the labours of the field, the merchant repaired to his shop, the soldier continued in the ranks,—men went, from day to day, and from place to place, obeying the calls of business and friendship as before; and instead of separating from their former acquaintances, or withdrawing from the avocations to which they had been bred, and by which they lived, they gave no symptoms, in any of these respects, of a change of habit, except that, being furnished with higher motives, they attended with an activity, a diligence and fidelity greater than ever, to all the claims of society and the offices of life.

This characteristic is finely exemplified in the Epistle to Diognetus, (chap. i. p. 41;) and with equal force by Tertullian: “We are no Brahmins, we are no Fakiers, we are not eremites or her-

mits, who flee from life. We are well aware of the obligations we owe to God, our Creator and Lord. We reject the enjoyment of none of his gifts; we seek only to preserve the requisite moderation, and to avoid abuses. We do not live in this world without participating in your markets, your baths, your public-houses, your workshops, your auctions, and every thing which pertains to the commerce of life. We engage with you in navigation, in military service, in agriculture, in trade. We engage with you in manufactures, and devote our labour to your benefit. How, then, we can seem unserviceable to your ordinary business, in which and by which we live, I see not. If I frequent not your religious ceremonies, yet, in the day appointed for them, I am still a citizen, as on other days. At the period of your Saturnalia I bathe not. I bathe not, like yourselves, at night, lest I should lose both the night and the day; and yet I bathe at my usual hour, for enjoyment and health. At the feasts in honour of your gods, I sit not down in public at the banquet, as those unhappy men do who then take their last meal before they are thrown to the wild beasts; but whenever I sup, I eat of the same provisions as yourselves. I will, however, confess that there may be some who have reason to complain of their want of support from the Christians. Among the first of these will be the vile panders of every kind of lust; in the next place, murderers, poisoners, magicians, fortune-tellers, soothsayers, and astrologers. To be profitless to such is itself great gain to the state.”<sup>1</sup>

## § 2. OF THEIR LOYALTY TO GOVERNMENT.

THE primitive Christians often came into conflict with existing institutions and laws of the state which contravened their religious faith; but in all else they were loyal and obedient subjects to the government, by which, too often, they were neglected, oppressed, and persecuted as outlaws. But they faithfully contributed to the support of the government, and fervently prayed for its prosperity. “We make it our principal endeavour, in every place, to pay tribute and custom to such officers as are appointed by you. We worship God only; but in all other matters we joyfully serve you, confessing that ye are kings and rulers, and praying that ye may be found to possess, together with your royal power, a sound and discerning mind.”<sup>1</sup>

But the “tribute of every other kind,” except revenues to the



temple, says Tertullian, "is deeply indebted to the Christians, who pay that which is due with the fidelity with which we abstain from all fraud. Whereas, if an account were kept of the injury which the commonwealth suffers by the fraud and falsehood which ye exercise, it would plainly appear that the accurate statement which we make of the tribute which we owe, would much more than compensate for any complaint which you make upon any other account."<sup>2</sup>

In another connection, he continues: "We reverence, in the emperors, the providence of God who placed them on their thrones. We know that the power which they possess is in conformity with the will of God.<sup>3</sup> We pray for the emperors, and for those in authority under them, for the powers of this world, for the maintenance of peace, and for the delay of the final judgment."<sup>4</sup> "We all pray without ceasing for all emperors, beseeching for them a long life, a secure reign, that their families may be preserved in safety, their armies brave, the senate faithful, the people honest, the whole world peaceful, and whatever other things either the people or the emperor can desire."<sup>5</sup>

Athenagoras, also, in his address to the emperors, A. D. 176, manifests the same loyal spirit: "Are any more devoted to you than we, who pray for the happiness of your government; that, according to right and equity, the son may succeed his father in the empire, that your dominions may be enlarged, and that all things in which you engage may prosper; and this for our mutual advantage, that so, leading a quiet and peaceable life, we may cheerfully obey all your commands?"

In addition to all this, Tertullian urges the importance of the prevailing intercessions of Christians in arresting or mitigating the judgments of heaven; and, after alluding to the vain efforts of idol-worshippers to propitiate Jupiter for this end, adds, "Meanwhile we, shrunk with famine and worn out with abstinence of every kind, cut off from all enjoyment of life, rolling in sackcloth and ashes, weary heaven with the importunity of our prayers, and reach the ear of God; but when we have thus extorted mercy, ye give honour to Jupiter and neglect God."

### § 3. OF THEIR MILITARY SERVICE.

THE loyalty of the Christians appears also in their military services to the state. Many, it cannot be denied, objected to an oath,

as prohibited by the Author of their religion ; but it is equally certain that many also assumed the military oath of allegiance to their sovereign, and served in his armies. Tertullian<sup>1</sup> and Eusebius<sup>2</sup> both affirm that the emperor M. Aurelius Antoninus gained a signal victory over his enemies in Germany through the prayers of a certain Christian legion in his army, known in history as "the thundering legion." Though the miraculous event recorded by them be called in question, it can hardly be doubted that Christians were numbered among the soldiery of this emperor, A. D. 161-180.

Under Maximianus, A. D. 286, a certain Theban legion being required, on one occasion, to turn their arms against their Christian brethren, meekly replied, "We offer our hands against any enemy, but count it unlawful to imbrue them in the blood of the innocent. Our swords know how to strike a rebel or an enemy, but not to wound guiltless citizens. We have always fought for justice and piety and the safety of the innocent. These have hitherto been the price of those dangers which we have incurred. We have fought for fidelity, which how shall we be able to keep to you, if we do not first keep it to our God?"<sup>3</sup>

In the fourth century, the military services of Christians to the state are the subject of frequent record in authentic history.

#### § 4. OF THEIR HONESTY AND INTEGRITY AS GOOD CITIZENS.

THE honesty, truthfulness, and blameless character of Christians, as citizens of the state, are the frequent subject of encomium in their early history. Pliny, in his famous letter to Trajan, A. D. 111, reports that, after the most diligent inquiry, he could find nothing against the Christians, other than that they were accustomed to meet together on a certain day for the worship of Christ, their God ; that they bound themselves by a covenant, not to the commission of crimes, but to refrain from fraud, from theft, from adultery ; to be faithful in performing their promises, and to withhold from none any property which might be intrusted to their keeping : that after this they separate, and meet again in the evening at a simple meal. This was all that he could allege against the Christians of Bithynia, except an "absurd and excessive superstition." Justin Martyr, half a century later, says, "When we are most severely examined, we never deny ourselves ; counting it impious in any thing to dissemble or deny the truth, as we know the con-

trary is acceptable to God.”<sup>1</sup> “When questioned, it is in our power to deny; but we will not preserve our lives by falsehood.”<sup>2</sup>

Tertullian, again, at the end of the second century, asserts the blameless character of the Christians. “You regard us as sacrilegious persons, and yet never found any of us guilty of wrong or injury, of rapine or violence, much less of sacrilege or impiety. No; they are your own party that swear by and worship your gods, and rob their temples. As for us, we deny not any pledge left with us; we defile no man’s marriage-bed; we religiously educate and train up orphans, and relieve the necessities of the indigent: but we render to no man evil for evil.”<sup>3</sup>

So remarkable were Christians for their blameless lives, that their apologists triumphantly call upon their persecutors to allege against them any crime. “Let but any of us be convicted of any crime, either small or great, and we refuse not to be punished; nay, we consent to submit to the most cruel and severe penalties.”<sup>4</sup> “We confidently appeal to your own records, kept by those of you who preside in our courts of justice, and make a distinct enumeration of the crimes of these who are brought before you. Out of so great a multitude as are there recorded, each with his own accusation, what murderer, what thief, what sacrilegious person, what corrupter of youth, what purloiner is described as also a Christian? They are men of your own party who fill your prisons; the sighs which rise from the mines are breathed by men of your religion; the wild beasts feed upon your men, and the vile herds of gladiators are replenished from the same source. Among these no Christian is found, unless the name of Christian be his only offence.”<sup>5</sup> “Were we Christians compared with you, though our discipline might seem to you somewhat inferior, yet we should be found infinitely to transcend you. You forbid adultery, and then practise it; we strictly keep our marriage-vows. You punish wickedness when committed; with us, even a wicked thought is sin. You stand in awe of those who are conscious of your crimes; we, of nothing but our consciences. Last of all, it is with your party that the prison is filled. No Christian is there, unless one who is a shame to his religion, or an apostate from it.”<sup>6</sup>

#### § 5. OF UNLAWFUL OCCUPATIONS.

THE first converts to Christianity, as we have seen, neither affected any religious austerities nor sought seclusion from the com

mon walks of life. But there were occupations in which they could not engage, trades which they could not follow, amusements and festivities in which they could not participate. Paul directed every man to abide in the same calling wherein he was called: 1 Cor. vii. 20. But many of the Ephesian converts, "who used curious arts, brought their magical books together and burned them before all men." (Acts xix. 19.) By this single act they made a sacrifice of eight thousand dollars, besides the loss of their gains for the future in giving up their customary occupations.

The trades of a diviner, of an astrologer, a soothsayer, a fortune-teller, and the manufacture of charms, shrines, images, and statues employed a multitude of men, and brought great gains to the tradesmen. To those who urged that such was their profession and their only means of subsistence, and that the apostle directs each one to remain in his own calling, Tertullian replied that, on this principle, every one of us might continue in our sins, for we are all sinners before God; whereas Christ came to call sinners to himself;—that this course of reasoning would permit the thief, the robber, the assassin to continue in their crimes, and require the church to be open to them all alike. He proceeds further to show, that to continue in such unlawful occupations is a total violation of covenant vows;\* and in answer to the sophistry of those who would plead that they did not themselves worship the images or idols which they made, but only manufactured them for sale, as articles of trade, he exclaims, with pious indignation, "Assuredly you, who prepare them to be worshipped, do yourselves worship them; not by the ministry of another, but by your own; you sacrifice to them, not the life of a victim, but your own life, your ingenuity and talent; you offer the sweat of your brow as their drink-offering, and kindle for them the light of your skill; you are more than priests unto them, by your own ministrations. Deny as you may your participation in the worship, they will not disown the worship while you offer in it the greatest, the richest of all sacrifices—your own souls' salvation."<sup>1</sup>

In conformity with the same conscientious scruples, Christians would not swear, as they were often required, by the emperor's genius; neither would they offer sacrifices for his safety, nor acknowledge him as a god, nor observe the festivals in his honour.<sup>2</sup>

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\* *De ipso sacramento nostro interpretaremur nobis adversas esse fidei ejusmodi artes.—De Idol. c. 6.*

“We worship the emperor as much as is either lawful for us or expedient for him, as subordinate only to God. We sacrifice for his safety, but it is to his and our God, and in the manner which our God has commanded—only holy prayer. For God, the Creator of the universe, requires no other incense or offering.”<sup>3</sup>

But the church, while they required the converts to Christianity to renounce all unlawful occupations, still made it their duty to support such as by this means were thrown out of employment, and to provide for them other occupations consistent with their Christian profession.

The profession of an actor and theatrical exhibitions were discountenanced, as inconsistent with the Christian character. Cyprian, in answer to one who plead that he had trained himself and his children for the stage, and had no other means of maintenance, refuses entirely the plea, but refers him to the church for the reasonable supply of his wants, and, if that is not sufficient, pledges his own church to the fulfilment of this duty.<sup>4</sup>

The frequenting of theatrical exhibitions was equally censured as an immorality of the ancient Christian church. Tertullian wrote a treatise on this subject, in which he argues that to attend such exhibitions is a violation of covenant vows and inconsistent with the purity of the Christian character. He insists on the danger of moral contamination, and the practice of hypocrisy and deception, which such shows occasion. He speaks of the theatre as the devil's own territory, and relates the famous story of a Christian woman who, in the theatre, was seized with a demoniacal possession, and gives the reply of the unclean spirit in answer to the inquiry why he should presume to molest in this manner one of the faithful—“that he had a perfect right so to do, because he found the woman on his own territory.” He further objects, that the name of God is there blasphemed, and plans formed for the persecution of the church. In conclusion, he refers Christians to the far higher sources of pleasure which are opened to them in the gospel, and to the tremendous pomp and solemnity of the last great day.

#### § 6. OF THE REFUSAL OF MILITARY DUTIES.

THE ancient church were divided in opinion and practice respecting the profession of arms. Some followed it, but others submitted even to a violent death rather than enter into the service of the army. Tertullian wrote a treatise in commendation of soldiers



who refused to wear a military chaplet, as savouring of idolatry and inconsistent with the Christian profession. In this treatise, he asserts the unlawfulness of a military life and of wearing a soldier's chaplet. The Christian ought rather to wear his Master's crown of thorns, in order thereby to obtain the crown of life.

It is related of a young man in Numidia, before the persecution under Dioclesian, A. D. 296, that he refused to take the military oath: "Strike off my head; I fight not for this world, but for my God." "Who has advised you thus?" said the proconsul. "My heart and He that called me." "But you must take the soldier's badge." "I bear the badge of Christ, my God." "I will soon send you, then, to your God." "Would that you might; but that will reflect no honour upon you." The proconsul then attempted by force to invest him with the soldier's badge. "I cannot wear it; I have taken the badge of the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, whom you know not, who died for our salvation, an offering for our sins. Him we Christians serve as the Prince of life, the Captain of our salvation." "Enlist in this service, that you die not miserably." "I shall not die; my name is with the Lord." "But there are Christians in Cæsar's army, good and faithful soldiers." "They know what they ought to do, and must judge for themselves; but I am a Christian, and cannot consent to do evil." "What evil do soldiers commit?" "You know well what they do: but I shall not die; when I leave this world, my soul will be with the Lord." As he received the sentence of death, he exclaimed, "God be praised!" and begged his father, standing by, to present the military uniform which he had prepared for him to his own executioner.

The military service often compelled the Christian soldier either to disobey orders or to violate his conscience by sacrificing to false gods, or by turning his arms against his fellow-Christians in times of persecution. Under Caius Galerius Maximian, son-in-law of Dioclesian, a legion of six hundred and sixty-six men, on being required to sacrifice to the gods and turn their arms against the Christians, quietly withdrew and remonstrated. Upon which every tenth man throughout the legion was put to death without resistance. The commander of the legion, with his sword dyed in the blood of his soldiers who had been slain at his side, exhorted the survivors to remain steadfast, and these, in answer to the renewed order of Cæsar, acknowledged their readiness to obey where the laws of Christianity did not forbid, and concluded by saying,

“Know thou that we all are Christians: our bodies we yield subject to your power; our souls we reserve entire for Christ, the Author and the Saviour of them.”

Enraged by this reply, he immediately ordered a second decimation. The surviving officers then returned answer: “We, O emperor, are your soldiers, but withal the servants of God. To you we owe military life; to him, innocency. From you we have received wages for our service; from him, our being and our lives. We cannot obey the emperor so as to deny God, the Author of our lives and of yours. It is not despair that sustains our resolution. We have arms, but offer no resistance, choosing rather to die innocent than live rebellious and revengeful. If you appoint us to greater sufferings, we are ready for them. Christians ourselves, we cannot persecute them that are also Christians. The bravery of our legion you must acknowledge. We lay down our arms, and bend our necks to the sword of the executioner. He will find our right hands disarmed, but our breasts armed with a true Christian faith.” They were immediately devoted to death, and died without resistance, with their arms at their feet.

#### § 7. OF UNDESIGNED ENCOMIUMS FROM ENEMIES.

THIS rapid and imperfect sketch of the social and civil character of the primitive Christians may, with propriety, be concluded with the tribute undesignedly paid to them by two Roman emperors.

Alexander Severus, A. D. 222-235, observing the excellence of their conduct in every condition of public and private life, on inquiring into their religion, had a bust of Christ placed in his private chapel among the images of others whom he honoured as superior beings; and learning that one of the ruling principles of Christians was to do to others as they would that others should to them, he was so charmed with it that he was continually repeating it, and caused it to be written upon the walls of his palace and upon all his public buildings, that, in every street and on all occasions, his subjects might be admonished by this admirable precept.<sup>1</sup>

The emperor Julian, A. D. 362, one of the bitterest enemies of Christians, unconsciously commended them for their charity, in supporting, not only their own poor, but all who needed assistance; for their hospitality, for their attentions to the sick, the infirm, the aged; and for their pious care for the dead, as well as for their brotherly love, and their purity of character, so opposed to pagan

licentiousness. The imitation of these virtues Julian urges upon Arsacius, the supreme pontiff of Galatia, as the most efficient means of promoting paganism; and then adds, "Establish hospitals in every town for the care of the sick and the entertainment of strangers, and for extending the cares of humanity to all that are poor. I will furnish the means. For it is a shame for us that no Jew ever begs, and that the impious Galileans should not only keep their own poor, but even many of ours, whom we leave to suffer." To another, he writes thus: "The impious Galileans, having observed that our priests neglect the poor, have applied themselves to that work; and have gained many from us, as they who steal our children attract them by offering cakes; and so they have led our faithful ones into infidelity, by commencing with charity, hospitality, and the service of tables; for they have many names for these works, which they practise abundantly."<sup>2</sup> This testimony is of great value in showing the customs of Christians in those days, and the nature of that teaching by example which not only commanded the admiration of an enemy, but compelled an emperor to follow it in pure defence, lest the hearts of his subjects should be stolen from him.

Reference has already been made to the persuasive power of women in the conversion of men. This engaged the notice of the enemies of the Christian religion. The men of Antioch, admiring the splendid talents of Chrysostom, bitterly lamented that his mother had alienated him from them. Libanius, his instructor, reproached the Antiochians of rank, because they suffered themselves to be governed by those whom they ought to govern—meaning their Christian wives and mothers.

The same orator, contemporary also with Julian, in the fourth century, apologizes for those Christians who, after their apostasy to paganism, again returned to Christianity, by ascribing this perversion, as he regarded it, to the influence of Christian women at home. "They are recalled by the women at home, and by their tears are again withdrawn from the altars of the gods." It was such examples of the constraining power of female piety which extorted from pagan enemies the reluctant encomium already cited: "What women these Christians have!"—a noble testimony to the refining, elevating power of woman, and the most beautiful tribute to the gentle, persuasive influence of her piety, which all antiquity, heathen or Christian, furnishes.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH, AND THE PECULIARITIES OF THE CHRISTIAN SYSTEM.

THE first formation of the Christian church was essentially different from that which it afterwards assumed; so that the history of the constitution of the church embraces two epochs, in which the primitive and the episcopal constitution of the church appear in direct contrast with each other. These two opposite systems of church government must be carefully distinguished in all archæological inquiries into the government, offices, and religious rites of the church. But, preparatory to a right understanding of the constitution of the primitive church, we must take into view the Christian idea of a universal spiritual priesthood.

#### § 1. OF THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS.

THE grand characteristic of the Christian religion, in distinction from the Jewish—of the religion of the New Testament contrasted with that of the Old Testament—was, that it utterly excluded all idea of a *mediating* priesthood in the worship of God. When the new and nobler order of the Christian dispensation began, the veil was rent which shrouded in mysterious darkness the awful presence of our God; the sacred altar and the consecrated priest, which barred the approach of the suppliant, were put away; Christ himself had in his own person broken down the middle wall of partition between us and our God, abolishing the Jewish ritual of ordinances and commandments which hedged up our way to the mercy-seat, and opening out a free access whereby all might come near with full assurance of hope. Christ, the Prophet and High-priest, had appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and had entered, not into the holy places made with hands, the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.

Christians, all alike, had accordingly now become—what the Jews

had been, but were no more—God's chosen people. They were all a "royal priesthood," and might come with equal boldness to his throne of mercy. By virtue of their relations to God, they viewed themselves as a spiritual people consecrated to him. The entire life of all was to be the service of a continual priesthood, a perpetual worship of him in spirit and in truth; a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto him. It was their reasonable service.

Whatever could be done for the service of Christ by the preaching of the gospel and the diffusion of Christianity, or for the edification of believers, was accordingly the duty, not of a select class of Christians alone, but was equally the duty of all, according to the peculiar qualifications and gifts of each.

These natural endowments and qualifications, sanctified by grace, were, in the age of the apostles, supernaturally quickened by peculiar spiritual gifts, which, according to his own ability given unto him, each was required to exercise for the edification of the church. This duty of Christians in the use of their spiritual gifts, the apostle Paul fully expounded to the Corinthian church, (1 Cor. xii.;) which exposition Neander paraphrases as follows: "Once, when you were heathen and were led blindfold by your priests to dumb idols, ye were as dead and dumb as they. Now that through Christ ye serve the living God, ye no longer serve such guides, drawing you along blindfold by leading-strings; ye yourselves have for a guide the Spirit of God that enlightens you. Ye no longer dumbly follow; he speaks out of you: there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit."<sup>1</sup>

Although the right and the duty implied in the office of a teacher were common to all, it does not follow that all were equally qualified to teach, or that they actually assumed this prerogative. Then, as now, there were different members of the same body; and these members had not all the same office, but each his own peculiar office, according to his ability. They who, by natural ability, by mental culture, or spiritual gifts, were qualified to teach, would give themselves to this work. To this office they were commonly ordained or set apart; and in this manner the office of teacher and of presbyter, elder, or bishop became closely connected and ultimately identified.

This idea that the whole church constituted a spiritual priesthood, that each believer was entitled to exhort, to teach, and to preach, continued for some time in the church, as may appear in the extracts below. But it is important to our present purpose, as an explana-



tion of the peculiar office and duty of the ministry in the apostolical and primitive churches.

"We, says Justin Martyr,<sup>2</sup> are the true high-priests of God, as God himself testifies, when he says that pleasant incense and a pure offering shall in every place among the heathen be offered to him. (Mal. i. 11.) He receives offerings from none but his priests. Prayer and thanksgiving only, brought by the worthy, are genuine offerings well-pleasing to God; and those, Christians alone are in a condition to give." Says Irenæus,\* "All the righteous have the sacerdotal dignity." Says Tertullian,<sup>3</sup> "We are the true worshippers and the true priests who, praying in the spirit, in the spirit offer to God the prayer which is his due, and is well-pleasing to him. Such prayer, coming from a heart full of devotion, nourished by faith, kept pure by a blameless life, made glorious by love, and accompanied with good works, we must with psalms and hymns bring to the altar of God; and it is all which God requires of us."

There was then no such distinction between clergymen and laymen, that compliances which would be acknowledged improper in the one would yet be considered harmless in the other. They were all equally the priests of God, and as such they felt their responsibilities, and as such they endeavoured to keep themselves unspotted from the world, and always to maintain the grave and serious demeanour becoming a priest of the Most High God. Says Tertullian,<sup>4</sup> "We are priests, called thereto by Christ. The Supreme High Priest, the Great Priest of the Heavenly Father, even Christ, when he clothed us with that which is his,—for as many of you as are baptized have put on Christ, (Gal. iii. 27,) did make us kings and priests to God and his Father." (Rev. i. 6.) "We are deluded if we imagine that that is allowed to the layman which is not permitted to the priest. Are not we laymen also priests?"<sup>5</sup>

These extracts may suffice to show that the primitive Christians viewed themselves as the *priests of God*, placed in a polluted world to sanctify it, to be purified temples in which the Holy Spirit might dwell, safe from the contact of surrounding corruption, to be purified channels in which the sweet influences of heaven, the rills from the river of life which surrounds the throne of God, might freely flow to purify a world which lay in wickedness.

The reasoning of Tertullian, in the treatises from which these citations are taken, is that the distinction between the clergy was

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\* Omnes justi sacerdotalem habent ordinem.—*Advers. Hæres.* iv. 20.

only conventional, and originally unknown. For the sake of order, he would have the ordinances only administered by the clergy; but, in their absence, he contends that any private Christian, as being himself a priest, may assume to teach and to preach, to baptize, and to administer the Lord's supper.

In proof of this clerical rank of all Christians, Neander also appeals to the fact, that at this early period men were designated to perform the offices of the clergy without any previous study or instructions to qualify them for it.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, even Bingham, to whom this notion of a universal priesthood is particularly obnoxious, as militating against the assumptions of episcopacy, admits that the title of priest was sometimes applied to the whole Christian church. He even gives two instances, from Socrates and Theodoret, in which laymen, without any formal consecration or ordination, assumed the ministerial office. Hilary, in the fourth century, acknowledged this primitive priesthood.\*

## § 2. OF THE ORIGIN OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

CHRISTIANITY, after the lapse of several centuries, assumed an intermediate character between other forms of religion. But it was, at first, a substitute for the religion of the Jews; or, rather, it was a modified and improved form of the same. The Author of this system was himself obedient in all things to the law of Moses, out of which he also taught his disciples, and, undeniably, derived from the same source the rites of initiation and fellowship, baptism and the Lord's supper. He was a constant attendant upon the religious worship of the synagogue, and, after his ascension, his disciples conformed their acts of worship to those of the synagogue. These consisted in prayer, in singing, and in the reading and exposition of the Scriptures, as appears from the writers of the New Testament, from the earliest Christian fathers, and from profane writers of the first two centuries.

In the synagogue worship, the followers of Christ found a most congenial institution. It invited them to the reading of the Scriptures and to prayer. It gave them liberty of speech in exhortation and in worshipping and praising God. The rules and government of the synagogue, while they offered little, comparatively, to excite the pride of office and of power, commended themselves the

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\* "Primum omnes docebant et omnes baptizabant."—*Ad Ephes. iv. 11.*

more to the humble believer in Christ. The synagogue was endeared to the devout Jew by sacred associations and tender recollections. It was near at hand, and not, like the temple, afar off. He went but seldom up to Jerusalem, and only on great occasions joined in the rites of the temple-service. But in the synagogue he paid his constant devotions to the God of his fathers. It met his eye in every place. It was constantly before him; and from infancy to hoary age, he was accustomed to repair to that hallowed place of worship, to listen to the reading of his sacred books, to pray, and sing praises unto the God of Israel. In accordance with pious usage, therefore, the apostles continued to frequent the synagogues of the Jews. Wherever they went, they resorted to these places of worship, and strove to convert their brethren to faith in Christ, not as a new religion, but as a modification of their own.

### § 3. OF ONE CHURCH ONLY IN EACH CITY.

THE Christian converts of each city formed one church, under several co-ordinate elders. Everywhere in the epistles of the apostles and of the apostolical fathers, the Christians of the same city appear as the members of one and the same church. They are addressed as the church at Corinth, at Ephesus, at Smyrna, at Philippi; one church only in each city where the gospel had been preached and a community of Christians formed. In this position ecclesiastical writers are so generally agreed that no further illustration is required; though the fertility of German speculation has started of late another theory, unworthy of notice.

### § 4. OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE CHURCHES.

THESE churches, wherever formed, became separate and independent bodies, competent to appoint their own officers, and to administer their own government, without reference or subordination to any central authority or foreign power. No fact connected with the history of the primitive churches is more fully established or more generally conceded, so that the discussion of it need not be renewed in this place.<sup>1</sup>

### § 5. OF PRESBYTERS, ELDERS, BISHOPS.

IN each of the churches, several persons were appointed, with equal and co-ordinate authority, as rulers and overseers of the

church. These officers were known by the name of *elders* or *presbyters*, and *bishops*. In churches of Jewish origin, they were generally denominated *elders*, *presbyters*, as a term of respect familiar to the Jews. In churches gathered chiefly from the Gentiles, their officers were more frequently called ἐπίσκοποι, *overseers*, *bishops*, with reference particularly to their duty as rulers to *oversee* and take care of the interests of the church. But by whatever name designated or known, the office was at first one and the same. They were only different names of one office.<sup>1</sup>

The appropriate and specific duty of these elders was the general supervision of their church and the direction and control of all the interests pertaining to it. They were, *ex officio*, *ruling elders*. Their office was not *exclusively to teach*; for this was the privilege also of the deacons, and of all, indeed, except the female members of the church. (1 Cor. xiv. 34; Tim. ii. 12.) But that the primary and most important duty of the presiding officers of the church was to preach and to teach, cannot be doubted. Such as were particularly qualified for this ministry of the word gave themselves wholly to this service, to which they were early set apart and ordained by peculiar religious solemnities,—the laying on of hands, and prayer. In this manner, as has been already intimated, the functions of the *minister* or *teacher*, and of the *elder* were gradually associated together. Compare the following passages: Matt. xxviii. 19; Mark xvi. 15; Acts vi. 4; 2 Cor. iii. 9, v. 18; Tit. i. 9; 1 Tim. iii. 2.

The relation which these presbyters sustained to their churches is concisely and clearly expressed by Neander: "They were not designed to exercise absolute authority, but to act as presiding officers and guides of an ecclesiastical republic; to conduct all things with the co-operation of the communities, as their ministers, and not as their masters. It could hardly work itself out in a natural way, from the essence of the Christian life and Christian fellowship, that this guidance should be placed in the hands of only one individual. *The monarchical form of government was not suited to the Christian community of spirit.*"

## § 6. OF DEACONS.

BESIDES the elders, there was, in the apostolical and primitive ages of the church, only one other office,—*that of deacon*. The specific duty to which the deacons were originally appointed, was to

assist in the distribution of alms. The care of providing for the poor, the sick, and of bestowing other needful attentions upon the members of the community, for the relief of those who were occupied with the duties of the ministry, devolved upon them. They also, in common with the other officers of the church, laboured in the word and baptized; so, at least, it is related of two of the seven deacons at Jerusalem, Stephen and Philip. (Acts vi. vii. viii.)

The rule of the churches, in regard to the choice of officers, we give again in the words of Neander: "The brethren chose their own officers from among themselves; or if, in the first organization of the churches, their officers were appointed by the apostles, it was with the approbation of the members of the same." And such continued to be the order of the churches for some time subsequent to the age of the apostles. Both deacons and presbyters appear to have been consecrated for their office by prayer and the laying on of hands. (1 Tim. iv. 14, v. 22; 2 Tim. i. 6; Acts vi. 6, xiii. 3.)

#### § 7. CHANGES IN THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AFTER THE AGE OF THE APOSTLES.

1. IN the distinction between bishops and presbyters. In the college of equal and co-ordinate presbyters, some one would naturally act as moderator or presiding officer; age, talent, influence, or ordination by the apostles, might give one an accidental superiority over his fellows, and appropriate to him the standing office of president of the presbytery. To this office the title of bishop was assigned; and with the office and the title began to be associated the authority also of a distinct order. Jerome alleges that the standing office and authority of a bishop were a necessary expedient to still the cravings and strife for preferment which, by the instigation of Satan, arose in process of time among the presbyters.\* Whatever may have been the cause, a distinction began to be made, in the course of the second century, between bishops and

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\* Idem est ergo presbyter, qui episcopus; et antequam diaboli instinctu studia in religione fierent, et diceretur in populis; ego sum Pauli; ego, Apollo, ego autem Cephæ, communi presbyteriorum consilio ecclesiæ gubernabantur. Postquam vero, unusquisque eos, quos baptizaverat suos putabat esse, non Christi, in toto orbe decretum est ut unus de presbyteris electus superponeretur cæteris, ad quem omnis ecclesiæ cura pertineret et schismatum semina tollerentur.—*Ad Tit. ii. Comp. Apost. and Prim. Ch. pp. 184-7, 254-63.*



presbyters, which finally resulted, in the century following, in the establishment of the episcopal prerogatives.

2. The formation of a sacerdotal caste among Christians. Without reference to the causes which occasioned the distinction between the clergy and the laity, this is worthy of notice as another important change in the constitution of the church, which gradually arose in connection with the rise of episcopal power. In opposition to the idea of a universal priesthood, the people now become a distinct and inferior order. They and the clergy begin to feel the force of conflicting interests and claims, the distinction widens fast, and influence, authority, and power centralize in the bishop, the head of the clerical order.

3. The clergy claim for themselves the prerogatives, relations, and authority of the Jewish priesthood. Such claims, advanced in the third century by Cyprian, were a great departure from the original spirit and model of the church derived from Christ and the apostles. It was falling back from the New to the Old Testament, and substituting the outward for the inward spirit. It presented the priesthood again as a mediating office between man and his God. It sought to invest the propitiating priest with awful sanctity, as the appointed medium by which grace is imparted to man. Hence the necessity of episcopal ordination, the apostolical succession, and the grace of the ordinances administered by consecrated hands. The clergy, by this assumption, were made independent of the people; their commission and office were from God; and, as a Mosaic priesthood, they soon began to claim an independent sovereignty over the laity. "God makes the priests," was the darling maxim of Cyprian, perpetually recurring in identical and in varied phraseology. No change, perhaps, in the whole history of the changing forms of church government can be specified more destructive to the primitive constitution of the church, or more disastrous to its spiritual interests. "This entire perversion of the original view of the Christian church," says Neander, "was itself the origin of the whole system of the Roman Catholic religion—the germ from which sprang the popery of the dark ages."<sup>1</sup>

4. The multiplicity of church offices. Few and simple were the offices instituted in the church by the apostles; but after the rise of episcopacy, ecclesiastical offices were multiplied with great rapidity. They arose, as may appear in the progress of this work, from different causes, and at different times; many were the necessary result of changes in the church and in society; but, generally,

they will be found to have, as their ultimate effect and end, the aggrandizement of the episcopate. They were an integral, if not an essential part of the ceremonial, the pomp and power of an outward religion, that carnal perversion of the true idea of the Christian church, and the legitimate consequence of beginning in the spirit and seeking to be made perfect in the flesh.

#### § 8. DOCTRINAL PECULIARITIES OF THE CHRISTIAN SYSTEM.

UNDER this head, we propose merely to specify some of the leading characteristics of the Christian system as a new and distinct form of religion.

1. This system presents the only true form of a *church*. The Jews had no distinct organization which could, with propriety, be denominated a church. Much less is any association under other forms of religion entitled to this appellation.

2. The Christian church has always been distinguished for its veneration for the Holy Scriptures. The reading and exposition of these has, from the beginning, been an important part of Christian worship. All the instructions and exhortations of the preacher have been drawn from this source. The prayers, the psalmody, the catechisms and confessions of faith of the early Christians, together with their religious ordinances, were all based on the Scriptures.

3. The doctrines of the Trinity and of the Divinity of Christ are the distinguishing characteristics of the Christian system. The institutions and ordinances of the church itself are based especially on the first-mentioned doctrine; so that there is not an ancient symbol, or confession, or rule of faith, in which it is not either expressed or distinctly implied; nor an ordinance which is not commemorative of the belief in God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. This is implied in the consecration of churches to God. Even the names of God, *Κύριος*, *Dominus*, according to the Athanasian creed, expresses the idea of a triune God. *Deus triunus*, *Pater Dominus*, *Filius Dominus*, *Spiritus Sanctus*, *Dominus*; *non tantum tres Domini*, sed *unus Dominus*. The same sentiment is implied in the baptismal formulary; in the three elements of the eucharist—the bread, the wine, and the water; and in the *three* great festivals of the ancient church, which were instituted about the fourth century. The same is also implied in the form of the ancient Chris-

tian's oath, which was usually taken in the name of God, of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit.

The doctrine of the divinity of Christ appears in the sacrament which commemorates his death, and in the religious services connected with this ordinance, as well as in the prayers, doxologies, psalms, and hymns which are addressed to him. The same sentiment is expressed in many of the emblems and symbols of the ancient church, and in their mystical names, such as *Ἰχθύς*, composed of the initials of the following Greek words: *Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, Θεοῦ Υἱός, Σωτήρ*, *Jesus Christ, the Saviour, the Son of God*. The mystical word *ABRAXAS* is another instance of the same kind, each letter representing the initials of the following words: *A אב Father, B בן Son, R רוח Spirit, A אחד one*, i. e. one God, *X Χριστός Christ, A Ἄνθρωπος man*, i. e. God-man, *S Σωτήρ Saviour*.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the ancient Christians appear, in this mysterious word, at once to indicate and to disguise their views of the doctrine of the divinity of Christ. The belief of the ancient church respecting the person and character of the Lord Jesus Christ has been set forth by Dorner, in his masterly work on this subject, in a light so clear, it would seem, as to end all controversy. Whatever may be the teaching of revelation, he has made it incontrovertibly evident that the doctrine of the supreme divinity of Christ was the prevailing and characteristic faith of the ancient church.<sup>2</sup>

4. It is peculiar to the Christian religion, that all the people take part in their religious services. The humblest worshipper, as well as the highest functionary, here enters the temple of his God, approaches the altar, and offers an acceptable sacrifice to our common God and Father.

5. It is the peculiar privilege of the Christian, that he may worship God, not at some appointed place, and at stated seasons, but at all times, and in every place. The reader is directed to an extended discussion on this subject in the index of authorities.<sup>3</sup>

## CHAPTER VII.

### NAMES AND CLASSES OF CHRISTIANS.

#### § 1. OF THE APPELLATIONS AND NAMES ASSUMED BY CHRISTIANS.<sup>1</sup>

THE professors of the Christian religion were originally called saints, ἅγιοι. This is their usual appellation in the sacred Scriptures. They apply this term, not only to apostles and teachers, but generally, to the community of Christians. The term is derived from the Hebrew, קְרִשִׁים, by which the Jews were denominated as God's chosen people, in distinction from all idolatrous nations. But by the apostle Peter, the several prerogatives and titles of the people of God are ascribed also to all Christians. He denominates them *a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people*. (1 Pet. ii. 9, 10.) But he also teaches that this sanctity consists, not in mere outward forms of social worship, but in that piety which their holy calling requires them to cultivate. 1 Pet. i. 15; 2 Pet. iii. 11, comp. Eph. v. iii; Col. i. 12, iii. 12.

The name was, doubtless, adopted for the sake of convenience, and not as implying that all were the true worshippers of the holy Jesus. Even a Judas Iscariot was numbered with the apostles. But, to the highest honour of Christianity, it may be said that her followers, generally, were men of a pure spirit, and sanctified the Lord God in their hearts. Such is the uniform testimony of her early historians and apologists. And even her enemies acknowledged that the spotless character of her followers caused religion to be universally respected, and led to its introduction into every country.

The equality of all Christians is clearly asserted in the Scripture. They are *brethren*, and, as such, have equal rights, ἰσοτίμιοι. Comp. 2 Pet. i. 1. They are one heritage, 2 Pet. v. 3, and all members of the same head, Col. i. 18. Nay, Christ himself asserts the equality of all his disciples: Luke xxii. 25, 26. And yet a distinction is made between the *master* and his *disciple*—the *teacher* and the *taught*. The one are denominated *the people*, ὁ λαός; *the flock*, τὸ ποιμνίον; *the body of believers*, τὸ πλῆθος τῶν πιστῶν;

*the church*, ἡ ἐκκλησία; *private persons*, ἰδιῶται; and *laymen*, or men devoted to secular pursuits, βιωτικοί. The others are styled *teachers*, διδάσκαλοι; *leaders*, ἡγούμενοι; *shepherds*, ποιμένες; *overseers*, ἐπίσκοποι; *elders*, πρεσβύτεροι; *rulers*, προεστῶτες, etc. Subordinate to these were the *deacons*, διάκονοι; the *widows*, χῆραι, or *deaconesses*, διακονίσσαι; the *attendants*, ὑπηρέται; and the *inferiors*, νεώτεροι. So that even the New Testament indicates an ecclesiastical order which, at a later age, became much more prominent.

The names which Christians assumed for themselves, such as *saints*, ἅγιοι; *believers*, πιστεῖσαντες, πιστοί; *elect*, ἐκλεκτοί; *disciples*, μαθηταί; *brethren*, ἀδελφοί; *people of God*, λαὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, and the like, were adopted from the Jews, and were expressive, severally, of some moral quality. But, in process of time, the common acceptance of these terms became so different from their original application, that they implied nothing more than the distinctive appellations of their community, composed both of Jews and Gentiles. What name they should assume became now a question on which they were greatly divided among themselves; and so much the more so, because they had, from the first, refused all sectarian names. They would call no man master; neither would they receive any title which should imply that their religion was of human origin. In this dilemma, a name was providentially conferred upon them which soon gained ascendancy among friends and foes, and supplanted all others.

Of the origin of this name, we have a distinct account in the eleventh chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, where we are informed that, while Paul and Barnabas were labouring together at Antioch, the disciples of our Lord first began to be called CHRISTIANS. The form of this word, Χριστιανοῖ, clearly proves it to be a Latin derivation from Χριστός, *Christ*. Nor is there the remotest probability that either the Christians or the Jews would have invented this name. To the latter this term was peculiarly offensive: 1 Cor. i. 23. The followers of Christ they styled Galileans, (Acts ii. 7,) or, the sect of the Nazarenes, (Acts xxiv. 5.) In the New Testament, the phrase occurs in only two other passages; and in these in such a connection as to indicate the foreign origin of the word. Acts xxvi. 28; 1 Pet. iv. 14, 16.

On the supposition that the pagan inhabitants of Antioch, in derision, first promulgated the name of *Christians* as a nickname, it is easy to see how it might soon come into general use among the



Romans. For that the Roman historians regarded Christians as an insignificant and contemptible faction, is evident from Tacitus, who says that "Nero inflicted the severest punishments upon those who were commonly called *Christians* and were detested for their infamous crimes. Their name they derived from one *Christus*, who, in the reign of Tiberius, suffered under Pontius Pilate."<sup>2</sup> Suetonius, also, referring evidently to Christians, relates that "the *Jews* were expelled from Rome because of their ceaseless tumults, to which they were instigated by one named *Christus*."<sup>3</sup>

It would seem, therefore, that the apostles themselves adopted the name which had been imposed upon them in derision, and rejoiced to bear its reproach. From the apostles, their followers adopted it as the exclusive name of their body. They joyfully assumed the name of their Lord and Master, in accordance with the rule of the apostle—"If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf." To be denominated a Christian was, in the estimation of Christian professors and martyrs, their highest honour. This is forcibly illustrated in the narrative which Eusebius has copied from an ancient record of one Sanctus in Vienna, who endured all the inhuman tortures which art could inflict without disclosing either his name or his native land, or his condition in life, whether freeman or slave. To all the interrogations of his tormentors he only replied, in the Latin tongue, *I am a Christian*; affirming that his name, his country, and his kindred, all were included in this.<sup>4</sup> Of the same import also was the deportment of the martyr Lucian, as related by Chrysostom.<sup>5</sup> To every interrogation he replied, *I am a Christian*. Of what country are you? *I am a Christian*. What is your occupation? *I am a Christian*. Who are your parents? *I am a Christian*. And such was his reply to every question.

It was a favourite consideration with the primitive Christians, that the name of *Christian* happily avoids all sectarian distinctions, and indicates the oneness of their faith and knowledge. "I honour Peter," says Gregory Nazianzen,<sup>6</sup> "but I am not called by his name. I honour Paul, but I am not of Paul. The name I bear is derived from no man; I am born of God." "No sect or church took their name from the apostles," observes Epiphanius.<sup>7</sup> "For we have never heard of the followers of Peter, Paul, Bartholomew, or Thaddeus. But all the apostles, from the beginning, held one faith, and preached, not themselves, but Jesus Christ their Lord. For this reason, they all gave the church one name, derived, not

from themselves, but from their Lord Jesus Christ, after they had already begun to be called *Christians* at Antioch." As they all had one Lord, so were they all *one*, and bore the common name of Christians, professing themselves to be the followers of Him, not as *the head of their sect or party*, but as the Author of their common faith. They even refused the name of *Christ's church*, claiming to be only a *Christian church*, i. e. a body of Christians. From this primitive church various religious sects separated themselves, who assumed the names of Manichæans, Simonians, Valentinians, Ebionites, etc.

Without attempting a full enumeration of the names which have been ascribed to Christians by the fathers, we give the following summary of the principal appellations by which they were known among themselves :

1. *Catholics*, denoting an adherence to the universal faith. While the church remained one and undivided, it was appropriately styled the *catholic church*. But after the rise of different sects, who, notwithstanding their separation from the church, still claimed to be called Christians, then did the true believers assume the name of *catholics*, to distinguish themselves from these heretical sects. So that the catholic church is the true church, in distinction from all heretics. None were allowed to be Christians who did not belong to this catholic church. "I am of the catholic church," said Pionius the martyr, "for Christ has no other." This name would, obviously, be claimed by all who supposed that their faith corresponded with that of the earliest ages of the church, and was such as ought to be, at all times, universal.

2. *Ecclesiastics*, *men of the church*. Eusebius, Origen, Epiphanius, and Cyril of Jerusalem frequently use this term in distinction from Jews, Gentiles, and heretics; and in such connection as not to designate by it the priesthood merely, to whom the appellation was afterwards restricted.

3. *Dogmatics*, οἱ τοῦ δόγματος, *men of the true faith*. This term denotes those who held fast the sound doctrines of the church. Primarily, it was applied only to religious teachers and rulers in the church, but subsequently, it was so extended as to include all who were sound in the faith.

4. *Gnostics*. Denoting such as are truly learned, in opposition to the pretensions of false teachers. By this name Christians especially characterized themselves as *the true Gnostics*, in distinction from an arrogant sect who claimed to be called by the same name.

Clemens Alexandrinus, Irenæus, and others, would intimate by this term that not merely the teachers, but all members of the catholic church were in possession of true wisdom, drawn from no corrupt fountain, and mixed with no foreign ingredient.

5. *Theophoroi*, Θεοφόροι, *Christophoroi*, Χριστοφόροι. These epithets, originally applied as titles of honour, became, in time, proper names. The former was first conferred upon Ignatius, who is usually quoted as Ignatius ὁ καὶ Θεοφόρος. From him, or some other ancient father, it passed into a surname; but whether from his declaration to the emperor Trajan that he bore Christ his God in his heart—or from the blessing of Christ bestowed upon him in his childhood—or from the name of Christ imprinted on his breast—or for some other reason, is not known. It is certain, however, that many other eminent Christians were so named.<sup>8</sup>

6. Ἰχθύς, *Fishes*. An acrostic fancifully derived from the initials of the several appellations of our Saviour. Ἰησοῦς, Χριστός, Θεοῦ Υἱός, Σωτήρ. The first letters of each are united in the word Ἰχθύς.<sup>9</sup>

The names Christian, Christiana, Christopher, Theophilus, and the like, so common in every age of the church, though adopted for convenience, by implication denote, also, devotedness to the service of Christ, and the acknowledgment of his name and his divinity.

## § 2. NAMES OF REPROACH AND DERISION CONFERRED ON CHRISTIANS BY THEIR ENEMIES.

THESE are, indeed, without number. Such hatred and contempt were felt for Christianity and its professors, both by Jews and Gentiles, that they seized every opportunity to expose the disciples of Christ as dangerous and contemptible men. The reproachful epithets cast upon them, with few exceptions, relate only to the first centuries of the Christian era, and are chiefly interesting to the historian and antiquarian. And yet they are of importance as illustrating the condition of the primitive church.

1. *Jews*. By the Romans, Christians were at first regarded as a Jewish sect, like the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. As such, they were accordingly denominated *Jews*, and despised as a superstitious and misanthropic sect. The name itself was a term of contempt; the Jews being universally despised as a superstitious and misanthropic race. After they began to be distinguished from the Jews,

they were described by Suetonius as a class of men of a new and mischievous superstition. *Genus hominum superstitionis novæ et maleficæ*.<sup>1</sup>

2. *Nazarenes*. Both Jews and Gentiles unitedly denominated the Christians Nazarenes.<sup>2</sup> The word is variously written Nazarenes, Nazerenes, Nazirenes, Nazorenes, and Nazurenes; but the signification was the same, and always implied reproach and contempt. (Acts xxiv. 5.)

3. *Galileans*. This name was probably derived from Acts ii. 7. It is so represented in the writings of Justin Martyr. Gregory Nazianzen,<sup>3</sup> however, ascribes the origin of this reproachful epithet to Julian the apostate. He uniformly denominated both Christ and his followers *Galileans*; and made a law requiring that they should not be called by any other name. He died with these remarkable words on his lips: *Ah! thou Galilean! thou hast conquered*.<sup>4</sup>

4. *Greeks*. In direct opposition to Julian, Christian converts were by the ancient Romans styled *Greeks*; which with them was a proverbial phrase, expressive both of suspicion and contempt, as an impostor. Whenever they saw a Christian in the highway, they were wont to exclaim, *Ah! a Greek impostor*.<sup>5</sup> Christ himself was regarded as an impostor. (Matt. xxvii. 63.) The practice of some Christians in wearing the Grecian pallium instead of the Roman toga had also some influence in attaching to Christians this epithet.

5. *Magicians*. By heathen nations, the Author of the Christian religion was styled Magician, and his followers magicians.<sup>6</sup> Our blessed Lord was generally believed by the heathen to have practised magical arts, by which he was supposed to have deceived the people.

Of other names which the malice of their persecutors invented or applied to them on particular occasions, the following is a brief summary.

*Sibyllists*. From their being charged with corrupting the Sibylline books. A favourite insinuation of Celsus.<sup>7</sup>

*Sarmentitii*. Derived from the fagots, *sarmenta*, with which the fires were kindled around them at the stake.<sup>8</sup>

*Semaxii*. From the stake, *semaxis*, to which they were bound.

*Parabolani*, *παράβολοι*. From their being exposed to ravenous beasts.<sup>9</sup> This was the name of those who were accustomed to fight with wild beasts.

*Βιᾶδᾶνατοι*, *self-murderers*. Alluding to their fearlessness of death.

*Ἄθεοι*, *Atheists*.<sup>10</sup> Their renunciation of the errors of polytheism was regarded as a denial of the existence and providence of God.

*Νεώτεροι*,<sup>11</sup> *Novelli*, *novissimi*, *nuperrimi*, &c., *new lights*, *innovators*. Authors of a new and barbarous superstition.

*Σταυρολάτραι*,<sup>12</sup> *worshippers of the cross*. (2 Cor. i. 18.) From the frequent use of the sign of the cross.

*Plautinæ prosapizæ*<sup>13</sup> *homines et Pistoires*, *men of the race of Plautus*, *bakers*. Plautus is said to have hired himself to a baker to grind in his mill.

*Asinari*,<sup>14</sup> *worshippers of an ass*. From an old prejudice against the Jews, of uncertain origin. *Creduli*, *Simplices*, *Stulti*, *Lucifugæ*, *Stupidi*, *Fatui*, *Imperiti*, *Abjecti*, *Hebetes*, *Idiotæ*, etc. *Credulous*, *simpletons*, *fools*, *infatuated*, *skulking*, *stupid*, *abject*, *ignorant*, etc.

Christians were also denominated worshippers of the sun, in consequence of their turning to the east in prayer. Many other causes may have contributed to the same result;—their reverence for Christ, the *Light* of the world; their observance of the Lord's day, Sunday, *dies solis*; and looking for the appearing of Christ in the east, at his second coming.

### § 3. DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE CLERGY AND THE LAITY.

THE first instance of the distinction of the clergy and the laity as separate orders of men in the Christian church, occurs in Tertullian, at the beginning of the third century.\* In this passage and the context, the laity appear as a distinct order, relatively opposed to the clergy, though still entitled, under certain circumstances, to enjoy the prerogatives and perform the office of priests. The term *clergy*, *qui sunt in clero*, appears in another treatise from the same author of about the same date.<sup>1</sup> The *clergy*, in the ecclesiastical phraseology of this age, are a class of men chosen to be the teachers and guides of their brethren, withdrawn from secular pursuits and devoted to the contemplation of heavenly things. The apostles often distinguish between the *teachers* and the

\* Differentiam inter ordinem et plebem constituit ecclesiæ auctoritas.—*Exhort ad Castitat.* c. 7.



taught, the *rulers* and the *ruled*, &c.; and this division, after their decease, continued in the church; but the clergy and the laity were not recognised as two distinct orders or classes in the church, until the close of the second and beginning of the third centuries.

In opposition to this view of the rise of the original orders of the hierarchy at so late a period, it is urged that the word *κλῆρος* occurs much earlier in ecclesiastical history. In reply, the position is admitted, but the conclusion is denied. The apostle Peter says of Judas, "He was numbered with us, and had obtained part, *κλῆρον*, of this ministry," (Acts i. 17;) which only shows that his lot was the same as that of the other apostles. Again, it is used to express the inheritance of the saints. (Acts xxvi. 18; Coloss. i. 12.) It describes the church collectively, the *flock*, over whom the presbyters are admonished not to tyrannize. (1 Pet. v. 3.) Eusebius<sup>2</sup> has preserved a short extract of a letter written in the second century by Christians in Vienna and Lyons to their brethren in proconsular Asia and Phrygia, in which the same term is applied to martyrs, as the Lord's heritage. Irenæus, of the same age, with whom Augustin also agrees, speaks of the *κλῆρος τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς διαδοχίας*, with reference to the original mode of election to the apostolic office, *by lot*, in the case of Matthias.\* Clement of Alexandria, contemporary with Irenæus and Tertullian, describes John as having gone about establishing in one place bishops; in another, organizing whole churches; and in another, the clergy allotting one and another of those who were designated by the Spirit.† This passage must be understood to relate to such of the clergy as acted either as rulers or teachers in these churches, without implying any official distinction between bishop and clergy, constituting a distinct order.

It appears, then, that previous to the time of Cyprian, in the middle of the third century, the clergy were not recognised as a distinct order of the hierarchy. The whole church constituted one order. They all viewed themselves as priests of God, and designated certain of the brethren to act as their spiritual guides and

\* Advrs. Hæres. i. 28, iii. 3. Et clerici et clericos hinc appellatos puto, quia sunt in ecclesiastici ministerii gradibus ordinati, quia Matthias sorte electus est, quem primum per apostolos legimus ordinatum.—Augustin in Ps. 67.

† "Οτου μὲν ἐπισκόπους καταστήσων ὅπου δὲ ὅλας ἐκκλησίας ἀρμόσων, ὅπου δὲ κλῆρον, ἕνα τὲ τινα κληρώσων τοῦ ὑπὸ τῶν Πνεύματος σημαίνοντων—Quis Div. Salv. c. 42.

teachers, claiming the right themselves to officiate in the same capacity, in the absence of such ministers.

It is remarkable that the fathers themselves are not agreed respecting the origin and import of the term κληρος, *clergy*. Jerome supposes it to be derived from the Levitical priesthood, as the portion of the Lord, whom he had chosen for himself; or else, because the Lord is peculiarly their portion.\* Augustin, with whom Chrysostom also agrees, supposes it derived from the lot, κληρος, by which Matthias was chosen in the place of Judas. In the passages cited above from Clement, Irenæus, and Eusebius, Neander supposes the clergy to receive this title from the fact that they were *chosen* to their office without a specific limitation to an election by lot.<sup>3</sup>

The clergy and the laity were subsequently divided into various classes. The consideration of the orders of the clergy will be reserved for another part of this work. The most general division was that of the *baptized* and the *unbaptized*.

#### § 4. OF THE BAPTIZED.

THIS term is used to designate the constituents of the Christian community; that body or assembly which was appropriately denominated *the church*, ἡ ἐκκλησία, and ἐκκλησία τῶν ἁγίων. Persons of this description were distinguished by various names, designed, in a measure, to illustrate the true nature and peculiar constitution of the church.

1. They were styled πιστοί, *the faithful*, as has already been mentioned. This is the favourite and universal name which has uniformly been used to denote such as have been duly instructed in the fundamental principles of the Christian religion, and received by baptism into the communion of the church. By this name they are distinguished, on the one hand, from the ἄπιστοι, such as are not Christians, and heretics; and, on the other, from the clergy, and from the catechumens, penitents, energumens, and ascetics. It is worthy of remark, that the disciples of Christ use the *active* form, οἱ πιστεύοντες, or, πιστεύσαντες, while the fathers uniformly use the *passive*, οἱ πιστοί. The latter, however, occurs occasionally in the New Testament, (Acts xvi. 1; 2 Cor. vi.

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\* Vel quia de sorte sunt Dei, vel quia ipse Deus sors, i. e. pars, clericorum est.  
—*Ep. ad Nepotian.* Comp. Num. xviii. 20, 1 Deut. x. 9.

15; 1 Tim. iv. 12, v. 16;) but in a sense more unlimited than that in which it is used by the fathers.

2. Φωτιζόμενοι, *illuminati, the enlightened*. This name they received upon being baptized, baptism being by them denominated φωτισμός, or φάτισμα, *illumination*. It is a curious fact, that the baptized are denominated φωτιζόμενοι, and candidates for baptism φωτισθέντες, while, on grammatical principles, precisely the reverse might have been expected. The usage of φωτισθέντες is supposed to be derived from Heb. vi. 4, as the most proper to denote such as were suitably enlightened to be received into the church.

3. Μεμνημένοι, *the initiated*. This appellation was most in use in the fourth and fifth centuries, when so much was said of the *disciplina arcani*, the secret mysteries of the Christian religion. It denotes such as have been initiated into these mysteries, a privilege belonging exclusively to members of the church. The phrase *the initiated know*, occurs about fifty times in Augustin and Chrysostom alone. The terms μυσταί and μυσταγωγῆτοί are also often used; and, in short, almost all the phraseology which profane writers use respecting an initiation into their mysteries. Indeed, the rite of baptism itself was early supposed to have an evident relation, as Cyril of Jerusalem represents,<sup>1</sup> to the initiatory rites of Eleusis, Samothrace, etc. In conformity with this usage, catechumens were denominated *the initiated*.

4. Τέλειοι and τελειούμενοι, *the perfect*. This name, like the foregoing, has a relation to their sacred mysteries. It is adopted from the New Testament, where it is used, not indeed in the same, but in a kindred meaning, in relation to Christian perfection. (Matt. v. 48; Heb. vi. 1.) To join the church, was styled ἐλθεῖν ἐπὶ τὸ τέλειον, or μετέχειν τοῦ τελείου, *to attain unto perfection*; and the participation of the sacrament, which in the ancient church invariably followed baptism, was denominated τελετὴ τέλε-  
των,<sup>2</sup> *perfection of perfections*.

5. The titles, *brethren, saints, elect, beloved, sons of God, etc.*, have ever been applied as the special prerogative of believers, or professing Christians.

The rights and privileges peculiar to this class of Christians were the following:

1. They were permitted to be present at all religious assemblies without exception; to take part in the *missa catechumenorum*, the first religious service of public worship, designed especially for the

catechumens, as well as in the *missa fidelium*, the after-service, which was particularly designed for them, and which none but the initiated, during the continuance of the secret discipline of the church, were permitted to attend. To this service neither catechumens nor any other were permitted to be present, not even as spectators.

2. It was another special privilege of *the faithful*, to hear and join in the rehearsal of the Lord's prayer. None but believers were permitted, in any case, audibly to adopt the language of this prayer and say, Our Father who art in heaven; though it might be used in silent prayer. In the worship of *the faithful*, on the contrary, it might be rehearsed aloud, or sung by them, or repeated in responses.

3. They were allowed to seek an explanation of all the mysteries of the Christian religion. Origen and Gregory of Nyssa allege, indeed, in commendation of Christianity, that it has mysteries, *μυστήρια, ἄρρητα, and ἀπόρρητα*, which no human mind can comprehend. But by this privilege is understood the right of acquaintance with all the rites and doctrines of the church and the subtleties of their faith. These were cautiously concealed from catechumens, and taught to believers only, because "by God's gift they were made partakers of these mysteries, and therefore qualified to judge of them." To the uninitiated, the ancient fathers discoursed only on obvious points of morality; and if, at any time, they were led to touch upon their profound mysteries, they dismissed them with the expression, *ἴσασι οἱ μεμνημένοι, the initiated know these things.\**

4. The distinguishing religious privilege of believers is that of partaking of the eucharist, which was regarded as the consummation

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\* De moralibus quotidianum sermonem habuimus, cum vel Patriarchorum gesta, vel proverbiorum legerentur præcepta: ut his informati atque instituti assuesceretis majorum ingredi vias eorumque iter carpere, ac divinis obedire mandatis, quo renovati per baptismum ejus vitæ usum teneretis, quæ ablutos deceret. Nunc de mysteriis dicere admonet atque ipsam sacramentorum rationem edere: quam ante baptismum si putassemus insinuandum nondum initiatis, prodidisse potius, quam edidisse, æstimaremur.—AMBROS., *De his qui mysteriis inicientur*, c. i. Dimissis jam catechumenis, vos tantum ad audiendum retinuimus: quia, præter illa, quæ omnes Christianos convenit in commune servare, specialiter de cælestibus mysteriis locuturi sumus, quæ audire non possunt, nisi qui ea donante jam Domino perceperunt. Tanto igitur majore reverentia debetis audire quæ dicimus, quanto majora ista sunt, quæ solis baptizatis et fidelibus auditoribus committuntur, quam illa, quæ etiam catechumeni audire consueverunt.—AUGUST., *Serm. i. ad Neoph.* Ἀσήμεως διὰ τοὺς ἀνήτους περὶ τῶν θεῶν διαλεγόμεθα μυστηρίων τούτων δὲ χωρίζομεν, σαφῶς τοῖς μεμνημένους διδάσκομεν.—THEODORET, *Quæst. 15 in Num.*

of all mysteries, and a participation in them; hence it received the significant name of *κοινωνία*, *communion*, *participation*.

5. In close connection with this privilege of communion stands also that important right which, as a member of the church, each communicant had, of taking part in all the transactions of that body, especially in *the choice of the clergy and of their ecclesiastical officers, and in the discipline of the church*.

In view of the importance of this right, we are surprised that it is but briefly touched upon by Bingham and other writers on this subject. This, however, is the proper place distinctly to assert this right of suffrage which the faithful enjoyed, although it is of necessity implied and included in the general privileges of church membership. That the church, i. e. the united body of believers, has had a part in the election of their pastor, from the earliest period downward, is certain, not merely from the testimony of Scripture, but also from the most ancient testimony of the fathers; and has never been denied, even by those who, in this respect, have been most anxious to abridge the privileges of the people. All they assert is, that the original usage has been changed, because of its manifold abuses, and of necessity abrogated. Hence has arisen the question, whether, in the election of a pastor, the church is entitled to a *valid* elective vote, or whether their suffrage should be testimonial only, or negative. Then, again, arises another question of equal importance, relating to the method of voting by proxy and by a body of electors, which, so far as is known, appears to have been first practised by the church in Africa.<sup>3</sup>

The limits prescribed for this work forbid the renewal of the discussion respecting the right of the church to elect their own teachers and rulers. In the election of Matthias (Acts i. 23–26 compared with i. 15) as an apostle; of the seven deacons, (Acts vi. 1–6;) of the assistants and companions of the apostles, (comp. 2 Cor. viii. 19,) and of presbyters, we recognise the suffrages of the church. Cyprian uniformly recognised the right of the people to choose and to reject their own pastors,\* and even the Apostolical Constitutions ordain that a bishop should be chosen by the whole people.<sup>4</sup>

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\* In ordinationibus clericis, fratres carissimi, solemus vos ante consulere, et mores ac merita singulorum communi consilio ponderare.—CYPRIAN, *Ep.* 33, *ad cler. et pleb. Carth.* Plebs ipsa maximam habet potestatem vel eligendi dignos sacerdotes, vel indignos recusandi.—*Ep.* 68.



The right of election continued unimpaired through the third century; but was finally wrested by episcopal power from the hands of the people. "Election by the people," says Riddle, of Oxford, "has been discontinued. This, indeed, in the estimation of episcopalians, is a great improvement; but still, as they must allow, it is a change." The change, indeed, none can deny; but the *improvement* may well be called in question. The loss of it was the extinction of religious liberty, and the removal of the greatest safeguard against the introduction of unworthy men into the Christian ministry.<sup>5</sup>

6. The incestuous person at Corinth was, at the instigation of the apostle Paul, both excommunicated and, on his repentance, restored to their fellowship by the *act of the church*. (1 Cor. iv. comp. with 2 Cor. ii.) [These same Corinthians, in the age immediately succeeding the apostles, rejected some of their presbyters from the ministry, whom Clement exhorts to submit to the authority of the multitude—the church.<sup>6</sup>]

The authorities from the early Christian fathers and from ecclesiastical writers have been duly collated elsewhere.<sup>7</sup> Planck, the great historian of the constitution of the church, and the highest authority on this subject, affirms that, so late as the middle of the third century, the members of the church still exercised their original right of controlling the proceedings of the church, both in the exclusion of offenders and in the restitution of penitents.<sup>8</sup>

The transfer of the disciplinary power from the church to the clergy should be carefully noted, as one of the most injurious invasions of the hierarchy upon the rights of the people. It invested the episcopate with dangerous prerogatives; and, more than all else, was, perhaps, the occasion of bringing into neglect all sound discipline. To expect such from an independent priesthood is to contradict alike the deductions of reason and the records of history.

#### § 5. OF ASCETICS, CENOBITES, MONKS, FRATERNITIES.

THE ascetics of *antiquity* and of the *middle ages* were essentially different in many respects. To the first class belong all those who sought a life of solitude for religious exercises and private contemplation, and, either alone or in company with others, separated themselves from Christian society without wholly excluding themselves from the communion of the church. These constituted, therefore, a distinct class of the laity.

The origin of the ascetic manner of life dates back far beyond the Christian era. In Egypt, Assyria, Persia, and India, there were, at this early period, ascetics, hermits, and recluses. The Therapeutics, of whom Philo and Josephus speak, were a religious fraternity who, in many respects, had a striking influence in the subsequent formation of monastic establishments. Many of the Pythagorean institutes also bore a striking resemblance to the monastic rules of later date. Some, again, have compared them with those of the Nazarites and Rechabites of Scripture, respecting whom Witsius and Less may be consulted. The prophet Elijah, the schools of the prophets, and John the Baptist have also been considered as patterns of monastic life. But its high antiquity is sufficiently proved by Jerome.<sup>1</sup>

As early as the second century, the foundations of monachism were laid in a vain admiration of the supposed virtues of fasting, solitude, and celibacy. Soon after the age of the apostles, bodily mortification and a contemplative life began to be regarded by many Christians as indications and means of extraordinary piety. In the time of Cyprian and Tertullian, the "sacred virgins of the church," or the "canonical virgins," were recognised as a distinct class; and celibacy was extolled as a species of supereminent sanctity.<sup>2</sup> Such superstition, with its pernicious adjuncts and consequences, made rapid progress in the church.

But many Greek and Latin writers concur in ascribing the origin of Christian anchorets and monks to the third century. They are believed to have arisen first in Egypt. Among the founders of this sect, some of the most celebrated were Paulus, Antonius, Pachomius, Hilarion, and Athanasius. To these may be added Basil the Great, Ephraim the Syrian, the two Gregories, Epiphanius, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Augustin, Jerome, Cassian, and many others.

In the fourth and fifth centuries, the monastic life had become common to all orders of men, not only in the eastern, but also in the western church; but it had not attained the celebrity which it afterwards acquired. Although the most distinguished of the fathers sought celebrity chiefly by their monastic life, the church were, as yet, far from according to monks the rights and privileges of the clergy. They were far from enjoying equal privileges with these officers of the church; neither were the monks reckoned among the laity; but they were accounted a distinct religious order, denominated *religiosi*, or *canonici*, by which, until the tenth

century, they were distinguished both from the clergy and laity. From that period, they began to be reckoned with the clergy. About the same time arose the distinction between the *clerici seculares* and *clerici regulares*. The former denoted such as had a regular parochial charge and cure of souls; the latter, the clergy belonging to some religious order. The *clerici seculares*, however, uniformly refused to own the monastics as fellow-labourers in the ministerial office. Indeed, the monks have never been fully blended with the clergy. On the contrary, in all cloisters, there has ever been a certain class of lay brethren, or lay monks, *monachi laici*, who, without discharging any of the appropriate functions of the ministry, have, as in the ancient church, occupied an intermediate station between the clergy and the laity.

The following are the principal orders of the monks, and the names by which they are distinguished:

1. *Ascetics*, Ἀσκηταί. Originally, the term was used by profane writers to denote the gladiators and athletæ of the ancients. But in the works of the fathers it denotes all of every age and condition who devote themselves peculiarly to acts of piety, such as fasting, prayer, watchings, and the denial of sensual desires. They are sometimes styled ἄγαμοι, *unmarried*, and ἐγκρατεῖς, *continentes*. There were also female ascetics. The monastics belonged both to the clergy and to the laity, and were of either sex, and from all conditions in life. They were men of active life, living in cities like other men, but devoted to prayers, fasting, watching, and intent upon high attainments in a religious life. The places appropriated for these exercises were styled ἀσκητρία.

2. *Monks*, appropriately so called, Μονάχοι, sometimes Μονάζοντες, οἱ μονῶ ζῶντες Θεῷ; such as lived a sequestered life, taking no part in the ordinary pursuits of men, and retiring alone into desert places and solitary cells; or, in company, frequenting the wilderness and distant mountains. These belonged exclusively to the *laity*, and were characterized chiefly by their deep seclusion from society; while the *ascetics* belonged either to the *clergy* or *laity*, and were distinguished particularly for their austerities. These monks were sometimes denominated *cœnobites*, *cœnobitæ*, *solitarii*, *solitaires*, etc.

3. *Anchorets*, Ἀναχωρηταί, *Hermits*. A distinction, however, is sometimes made between the two—anchorets denoting those who led a solitary life without establishing their residence in solitude;

while hermits are those who inhabit the most desolate and inhospitable places, in solitary cells and caves.<sup>3</sup>

4. *Cænobites*, from κοινὸς βίος, *communis vita*. So called from their inhabiting one place in common, styled *cænobiūm*, and having all things in common. They are also called συνοδίται,<sup>4</sup> and, from συνόδοις,<sup>5</sup> οἱ ἐν συνοδίῳ ζῶντες, *conventuales*.<sup>6</sup>

5. *Gyrovagi*. Strolling vagrants, whose lives were dishonoured by the lowest sensuality and the most shameless vices.<sup>7</sup>

6. Στυλίται, *Pillarists*. So called from their living continually upon a pillar; a manner of life so austere and forbidding that few were induced to adopt it.<sup>8</sup>

There are a multitude of names denoting different classes of monks and ascetics; the mention of which may serve to show how numerous were these religious orders in the ancient church, and the estimation in which they were held. Such as the following:

7. Σπουδαῖοι, *studiosi*,<sup>9</sup> Ἐκλεκτοί, *electi*,<sup>10</sup> Ἀκοίμητοι, *insomnes*,<sup>11</sup> Βοσχοί, *pascentes*,<sup>12</sup> from their living, like brutes, upon herbs and roots, and subjecting themselves to the severest austerities; Ἠσυχασταί, *quiescentes*,<sup>13</sup> who lived by themselves in perpetual silence; Ἀποταξάμενοι, *renuntiantes*;<sup>14</sup> *Culdei, Keldei, Keledei*, etc., certain monks in Scotland and the Hebrides; *Apostolici*, monks in Britain and Ireland.

8. *Canonici regulares*, clerical monks. These were the priests who were addicted to a monastic life, in distinction from the secular or parochial clergy, *canonici seculares*.

9. *Secular monks*, monachi seculares; a class distinct from the lay brethren. These, without renouncing marriages and the social relations, under the guidance of overseers of their choice, devoted themselves to various offices of piety. Thus constituted, they served as patterns for those religious fraternities or brotherhoods which first appeared in France, Italy, and Germany, in the ninth century, and, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, became exceedingly numerous and powerful, and widely dispersed. All these fraternities occupied an intermediate rank between the laity, the monks, and the clergy.<sup>15</sup>

Monastics of the female sex were not, at first, accounted a distinct religious order. Nor is there mention of them as such so long as the ancient rule of the church remained in force, which positively debarred women from ever conducting religious worship or assuming any of the offices of the priesthood.

Monasteries and nunneries probably arose simultaneously. The

first traces of the associations of *women* in a monastic life discover themselves in the fourth century. In this period, they begin to be denominated *Movaxai*, but more frequently *Movai*, *monæ*, *solæ viduæ*. Jerome was the first to call them *Nonnæ*, nuns. By some, this is understood to be the same as *matron*, or venerable widow. Others derive it from *Novis*, a *virgin*. They are also called by many other names, such as *Sanctimoniales*, *Virgines Dei*, *s. Christi*, *Ancillæ Dei*, *Sorores ecclesiæ*, etc. But by whatever name they are known, they are carefully to be distinguished from the ancient order of deaconesses in the church. As early as the fifth and sixth centuries, the office of deaconess ceased in the western church. After this, many offices of charity which they were wont to perform to the poor and the sick were discharged by the sisters of the church. For this purpose, they formed themselves into various associations and corporations. Their influence was in general very happy, and so powerful that they outlived the storms of political revolutions, and, to a great extent, still survive under various names and in different establishments.

#### § 6. OF PENITENTS.

NONE but such as had received baptism and confirmation could be reckoned among the penitents. They consisted of such lay members of the church as had been separated from it by reason of their unworthy deportment, or for grosser offences, and who voluntarily submitted to the penalties inflicted upon them with a view to their readmission into the church, and restoration to Christian fellowship and the privileges of communion.

The clergy under the hierarchy were subject to a discipline peculiar to their order, which will be the subject of a separate article in another place. The consideration of the penitentiary system of discipline to which the penitents were subjected is reserved for a chapter in the subsequent part of this work.

#### § 7. OF CATECHUMENS.

THIS class of Christians comprised the great part of the unbaptized, previous to the general prevalence of the Christian religion and of the rite of infant baptism. Converts to Christianity were gathered from Jew and Gentile, barbarian and Greek. These, on seeking admission to the Christian church, were, at an early period,



subjected to a peculiar probationary course of instruction and discipline, preparatory to admission to the privileges of full communion with the church.

But we look in vain for this order of Christian converts in the age of the apostles. A renunciation of polytheism, and a belief in God as the only living and true God, were required of the converts from idolatrous nations who would receive the ordinances of the Christian church; and all, both Jews and barbarians, were required to avow their faith in Christ, and to covenant to live agreeably to his laws. On such general expressions of their faith and covenant, the earliest converts were received by baptism into the church of Christ without further probation. But the evils of this hasty and indiscriminate admission to the church of all who professed repentance and faith in Christ were soon manifest. Even the churches which were planted by the apostles themselves were greatly dishonoured by the hasty admission of unworthy men. To guard against such disastrous consequences, the churches, soon after the age of the apostles, gradually instituted a severe and protracted inquiry into the character and views of those who sought the privileges of their communion. They were put upon a course of instruction and discipline, more or less extended, before being received into the communion of the church. These candidates for admission to the church were denominated catechumens. The rise of this order may be traced back to the latter part of the second century. The system was gradually developed in the third century, and reached its culminating point about the beginning of the fifth century; after which it fell by degrees into disuse.

Catechumens are mentioned by Tertullian, A. D. 180; by Clemens Alexandrinus, A. D. 190, and by Origen, A. D. 202. But in the fifth century, the secret discipline had already been discontinued; converts from Jews and pagans had become comparatively few, and with the cessation of the causes which gave rise to this system of catechetical instruction, the system itself in a great measure ceased; but, in one form or another, the catechetical instructions of the young and the uninitiated have continued to the present time.

A prudent regard to the purity of the church and the honour of religion appears to have given rise to this complicated system of preparatory instructions and discipline. Other causes, however, soon began to change the original character and intent of the institution, and to pervert it into the means of promoting sinister and

selfish ends. It early became almost a necessary part of the secret discipline of the church. It is clearly evident also from the Apostolical Constitutions, the writings of Cyril of Jerusalem, and of the Pseudo Dionysius, that these catechetical instructions had also a close analogy to the initiatory rites of the Eleusinian, Samothracian, and Pythagorean mysteries. They became, in the hands of the bishop, an efficient means of advancing the power and sustaining the interests of the episcopate. The catechumen, by a long course of discipline, was prepared, on his admission to the church, to become the apt and trained disciple of the bishop, acting in obedience to his will and in subserviency to his interests.

For admission into the order of catechumens, the name of the candidate must be proposed to the bishop, with references to suitable witnesses or sponsors. If, upon examination, the candidate was deemed worthy by the bishop, he caused his name to be enrolled in the books of the church, called *δίπτυχα ζώντων*, and with prayer, the laying on of hands, and the sign of the cross, received him into the number of the catechumens.

The catechumens take their name from *κατηχούμενοι*, *learners*, a word of frequent occurrence in the New Testament. (Acts xviii. 25; Gal. vi. 6; 1 Cor. xiv. 19.) The catechumens of the ancient church were candidates for baptism, under instruction for admission into the Christian church. They were styled candidates, *candidi*, because they were wont to appear dressed in white on their admission to church. In the Latin church, they were sometimes denominated *novitii*, *tirones*, *audientes*, *rudes*, *incipientes*, *pueri*, etc., equivalent to the terms *pupils*, *beginners*, *novitiates*, *learners*, etc.

The importance of this order, in the opinion of the ancient church, appears from the fact that schools were instituted especially for their instruction, and catechists appointed over them. One part of the church service was also suited to them especially, and another to the faithful. The discipline and instruction which they received in this manner were usually an indispensable preliminary to their admission into the church.

Clemens Alexandrinus and Origen have much to say in recommendation of a certain *secret doctrine* of the church, *μυστηριοσφία*, *scientia arcani*. This discovers itself about the same time with the order of catechumens, and appears to have fallen into disrepute as the church increased and additions were made to it from baptized children of Christian families, rather than from the candidates who had been received from among Jews and Gentiles.

There was no specific rule respecting the age at which Jewish and heathen converts were received as catechumens. History informs us that the greater part were persons of adult age. Even Constantine the Great was reckoned among this class. The delay of baptism, against which Gregory of Nyssa and others inveighed so earnestly in the fourth century, seems to intimate that these subjects of baptism were usually advanced beyond the legal age of manhood. It must, indeed, be admitted as an exception to this usage, that whole families were occasionally baptized, as in the times of the apostles. (Acts xvi. 15, 31, xviii. 8; 1 Cor. i. 16.) And as an argument in favour of infant baptism, such examples are the more persuasive from the fact that after the fourth century pedobaptism was much more generally introduced and defended. In the mean while, no rule is given for the children of Christian parents, respecting their requisite age for becoming catechumens. And it is remarkable that Tertullian and Cyprian, who in other respects are so harmonious, should so disagree on this point. The latter was an advocate for pedobaptism; the former, a zealous opposer. "It is better," he says, "for each one to delay his baptism, according to his condition, disposition, and age—especially for the young. Let them come when they have arrived to maturity; let them come when they have sufficient knowledge—when they are taught why they come; let them become Christians (by baptism) when they have a competent knowledge of Christ."<sup>1</sup>

The case of Augustin may, with propriety, be cited in this place. By his pious mother Monica he had, from his infancy, been carefully instructed in the Christian religion. In consequence of a dangerous sickness, he was about to be baptized in early childhood, that he might die as a Christian, under the covenant. But the administration of the ordinance was deferred in consequence of his recovery; and the delay he regarded as a kind Providence. From this example, the inference is, that he might have received due preparation for the ordinance from his pious mother; but that his baptism would have been an exception to the general rule on this subject. He was converted under Ambrose of Milan; and, though at this time a distinguished writer, became a regular catechumen. After due preparation, he was baptized in the year 387.<sup>2</sup>

It is, however, certain that children were, at an early age, the subjects of baptism, and that, too, not merely in cases of emergency, but by established rule and usage; for it was against this usage that Tertullian felt himself constrained to write. But these

little children, who were incapable of knowing Christ, as Tertullian describes them, could not, of course, be subject to any such preliminary preparation as the catechumens received. They could only be subject to such exercises *subsequent to baptism*, just as, since the general introduction of infant baptism, the subsequent instructions preparatory to confirmation are regarded, which is a religious ordinance introduced into the church very unlike the original usage.

No general rule prevailed respecting the time which the catechumens should spend in that relation. It varied at different times and according to the usages of the several churches; especially, according to the proficiency of each individual. In the constitution of the apostles,<sup>3</sup> three years are prescribed. By the council of Illiberi,<sup>4</sup> A. D. 673, *two years*. By that of Agatha,<sup>5</sup> A. D. 506, eight months. Cyril of Jerusalem and Jerome direct them to observe a season of fasting and prayer for forty days.<sup>6</sup> From all which the inference is that there was no determinate rule on this subject. This public preparation of the catechumens necessarily implies that they were previously subject to *private instruction*. The same is inferred from the instructions which were preliminary to confirmation. The true idea of which is, that of completing and confirming the discipline to which the candidate has already been subjected. Exceptions there undoubtedly were. Instances may be adduced in which all the preparation which the candidate received was limited to a single day.<sup>7</sup> And the procedure is authorized by examples in the Scriptures. But the rules of the church have usually required a longer period of probation.

The catechumens were early divided into separate classes. But their number and their names were somewhat different. The Greek canonists specify two classes.<sup>8</sup> The uninitiated, ἀτελέσ-τεροι, and the more advanced, τελέστεροι, *perfectiores*. Beveridge, Basnage, Suicer,<sup>9</sup> and others, make mention also of two classes, the ἀκροώμενοι, such as are occupied in learning, and εὐχόμενοι, such as are engaged in devotional pursuits. Maldonatus gives three classes,<sup>10</sup> the *audientes*, the *competentes*, and the *pœnitentes*. According to Bingham,<sup>11</sup> there were *four* classes: 1. Those who were subject to private instruction. 2. Such as received public instruction. 3. Those who were occupied with devotional exercises. 4. Those who were duly qualified for baptism. But this classification is not duly authorized.

These distinctions, however, are of little importance, and have never been generally recognised. They seem to have been made



as occasion required, rather than by any essential rule of classification. The churches at Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, and Alexandria were at variance among themselves on this point, and each agreed with the churches of its own communion only in a few leading particulars. The gradations of improvement were particularly observed. The age and sex and circumstances of the catechumens were also duly regarded. Male and female catechumens formed distinct classes; and men of rank and distinction were usually separated from children of twelve or thirteen years of age. But at other times, and in different places, all may have been united into one class, or divided into several, as occasion required.

The mode of their admittance was very brief and unceremonious. But some form of admission was uniformly required; a circumstance which illustrates the degree of consideration in which the rite was held, while it indicates the existence both of some determinate time of admission, and of some difference of opinion respecting it. The imposition of hands was one of the prescribed ceremonies.<sup>12</sup> The sign of the cross is also mentioned. Augustin received the sign of the cross, and affirms that this, with the imposition of hands, was the usual mode of setting them apart. By Porphyry, bishop of Gaza, converts from paganism were received by prostrating themselves at his feet and requesting to receive the sign of the cross. After having passed upon them this sign and received them as catechumens, he propounded them for admission to the church and dismissed them with his benediction. Soon after this, he baptized them, having previously given them catechetical instruction.<sup>13</sup> In this instance, the term of probation must have been short. They were also immediately recognised as candidates for baptism, without reference to the distinction of classes.

The manner of receiving a catechumen, therefore, was substantially as follows:—"The bishop examined the candidate, and, if he was found worthy, enrolled his name in the records of the church. The solemnity was then concluded by prayer, imposition of hands, and the signing of the cross."

The exercises of the catechumens, until their union with believers, were wholly directed with reference to their preparation for baptism. They consisted generally in attending to various catechetical and doctrinal instructions, the reading of the Scriptures, etc. Particularly, the ten commandments and the Lord's prayer were committed to memory, and the *symbol*, the creed or confession of faith of the church. These the catechumens were expected to



commit to memory; and the advanced class, styled *competentes*, before baptism were required publicly to rehearse them from memory, and to subject themselves to an examination *before the church* respecting their general character, and their knowledge of the Scriptures and of the doctrines of the church. They who were received on such examination as candidates for baptism, were said to be elected, *electi*. Thus the authority and intervention of the church in the admission of members was duly recognised, even after the full establishment of the hierarchy.\*

The last forty days previous to baptism were particularly spent in fasting, prayer, and confession of sins. After the third century, various superstitious rites were connected with the preparation for baptism; such as exorcising the candidate, requiring him to renounce the devil and his works; *insufflation*, breathing upon him by the bishop, after the manner of Christ, (John xx. 22;) anointing the eyes, (John ix. 6;) opening the ears, (Mark vii. 34;) veiling the face, and administering salt, *sacramentum catechumenorum*, as a type of the sacrament of the Lord's supper.<sup>14</sup>

The instruction of catechumens was the appropriate office of the bishop. These instructions were given either by him or by presbyters, deacons, readers, or exorcists under the bishop's supervision. They were not given publicly in the church, but privately in some convenient place; all but the catechumens being carefully excluded. The baptisteries were frequently used for this purpose, and, subsequently, the school-building connected with the church.

If any were guilty of offences requiring censure, during their probation, they were degraded to a lower class; their baptism was deferred for three or even five years.<sup>15</sup> The severest penalty to which they were subject was the delay of baptism until death. If the delinquent died without baptism, he was treated as a suicide, and his funeral was attended without the customary solemnities.

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\* Ex more catechumenus post aliquantum nihilominus temporis, propinquantē solemnitate paschali, in competentes offertur, scribitur, eruditur, universa quoque religionis catholicæ veneranda mysteria cognoscens, atque percipiens, *celebrato solemniter scrutinio*, per exorcismum contra diabolum vindicatur, cui se renunciare constanter, sicut hæc consuetudo poscebat, auditurus symbolum profitetur. Ipsa insuper sancti symboli *verba memoriter in conspectu populi fidelis clara voce pronuncians*, piam regulam dominicæ orationis accepit, simulque et quid crederet, et quid oraret intelligens, futuro baptismati parabatur.—FULGENT. *Ferrandus*, A. D. 530, in Bibl. PP. T. xi. p. 319. Comp. August. De Fide, et Oper. c. 6, conc. Cartag. iv. c. 85; Leo in Ep. 4.

In case of severe sickness, baptism was administered to the patient on his bed, ἐπὶ τῆς κλίνης. This was called *clinic baptism*. In such instances, it was allowable to administer it by sprinkling. Baptism was also administered to apostate catechumens in the near approach of death, and to such apostates as gave evidence of repentance it was not denied, even though they were not received to the class of penitents.

Any one devoted to martyrdom was reckoned among the catechumens, martyrdom being regarded as a full substitute, and therefore styled *blood baptism*.<sup>16</sup> This notion was derived from various passages in the Scriptures: "He that loseth his life, shall find it." (Matt. x. 39.) "I have a baptism to be baptized with." (Luke xii. 50.) Baptism was accounted essential to salvation. Martyrdom was also esteemed a passport to heaven. It was, therefore, made a substitute for baptism.

On the contrary, if any catechumen who had caused the delay of his baptism by his crimes died unbaptized, he was not treated as a Christian. His name was not enrolled in the records of the church while living, and after death he was denied the solemnities of Christian burial, and refused a place in the catalogue of Christians. He was buried *sine cruce et luce*.

Much controversy has arisen out of a passage from Augustin,<sup>17</sup> respecting the sacrament of the catechumens, relating chiefly to the consecrated bread, *panis benedictus*. But Bona, Basnage, and Bingham have sufficiently shown that it was not the sacramental bread, but bread seasoned with salt; and that this, at their baptism, was administered with milk and honey, salt being the emblem of purity and incorruption.<sup>18</sup>

#### § 8. OF ENERGUMENS, OR DEMONIACS.

MENTION is often made, in the ancient church, of persons possessed of an evil spirit. The regulations of the church bestow upon them especial care. They constitute a distinct class of Christians, bearing some relation both to the catechumens and the faithful; but differing from both in this, that they were under the special oversight and direction of exorcists, while they took part in some of the religious exercises of both classes.

Catechumens who during their probationary exercises became demoniacs were never baptized until thoroughly healed, except in case of extreme sickness.<sup>1</sup> Believers who became demoniacs, in

the worst stages of their disease, like the weeping penitents, were not permitted to enter the church; but were retained under close inspection in the outer porch. From this circumstance, they were denominated *χειμαζόμενοι*, or *χειμάζοντες*, *hyemantes*. When partially recovered, they were permitted, with the *audientes*, to join in public worship; but they were not permitted to partake of the sacrament until wholly restored, except in the immediate prospect of death. In general, the energumens were subject to the same rules as the penitents.<sup>2</sup> That the Christians of the first and second centuries believed the reality of demoniacal possessions cannot be doubted; nay, they firmly believed that they had power, like our Lord, to cast out devils. Eusebius affirms that they "certainly and truly cast out devils;" and that many thus healed believed and were received into the church. Tertullian and Irenæus often affirm the same, and appeal to their enemies in proof of it.<sup>3</sup> The subject of energumens will again come into notice in connection with the exorcists.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### OF THE SUPERIOR ORDERS OF THE CLERGY.

THE clergy of the apostolical churches were ordinary and extraordinary. After the multiplication of ecclesiastical offices, in the third and subsequent centuries, the clergy were divided into various orders, according to the convenience or caprice of different churches. The prevailing distinction, however, was that of the *superior* and *inferior* orders of the clergy. In the former were generally included bishops, presbyters, and deacons; in the latter, the numerous subordinate offices of the clergy under the hierarchy. Agreeably to this classification, we are to consider in succession the several orders of bishop, presbyters, and deacons, after a brief preliminary notice of the ordinary and extraordinary officers of the apostolical churches and of the different orders of the clergy.

#### § 1. PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

I. *Extraordinary teachers in the apostolical churches.*—These were known in the church only while the miraculous gifts of the Spirit continued. They were apostles, evangelists, and prophets. The precise nature and characteristic distinctions of these officers it is not our province to define. The discussion is given at length by Neander in his “Planting of the Christian Church by the Apostles.” The distinction of ordinary and extraordinary, however, seems to be justified by such passages as the following: Eph. iv. 11, 12, compared with 1 Cor. xii. 28; Rom. xii. 7, 8; 2 Tim. iv. 5, &c. These extraordinary offices, whatever they were, ceased with the age of the apostles. The office of the apostles bears no resemblance to any other. They were commissioned by Christ, and were endowed with spiritual gifts to transmit his word and Spirit to the whole Christian church through all ages. Their authority can be delegated to none else; as apostles, they can have no successors. The fiction of the apostolical succession is a delusion which, in extravagant folly and superstition, is, perhaps, without a parallel even in the history of religious extravagances.

II. *The ordinary officers of the apostolical church.*—The original and ordinary officers of the church consisted of two classes; the first, known by different names, ἐπίσκοποι, *overseers, superintendents, bishops*, πρεσβύτεροι, *presbyters, elders*, διδάσκαλοι, *teachers, ποιμένες, pastors*, &c.; the second, διάκονοι, *servants, deacons*.

The two orders of the clergy established by the apostles continued until the latter part of the second and first half of the third centuries. Tertullian,<sup>1</sup> A. D. 220, is the first to make mention of a new and subordinate order, that of *readers*. Cyprian,<sup>2</sup> A. D. 250, speaks of *sub-deacons, acolyths, and readers*. There were also exorcists, at the same time, in the church at Carthage. Eusebius<sup>3</sup> has preserved a fragment of an epistle from Cornelius of Rome, A. D. 250, from which it appears that there were in that church also the same officers, to which is added that of *janitors*. These were accounted an *inferior order*, while bishops, presbyters, and deacons constituted the *superior order*. The inferior order were the attendants, assistants, and servants of their superiors, to wait upon and assist them in their ministrations, and to render the rites of public worship more formal and imposing.

III. *Divisions and classes in different churches.*—In the divisions of the priesthood, it is a great mistake to seek for uniform and fixed rules without regard to the exigencies of different communities and countries. From a letter to Fabius, bishop of Antioch, written by Cornelius of Rome, who died A. D. 250, it appears that the inferior orders of the clergy at Rome composed five classes, sub-deacons, acolyths, exorcists, readers, and doorkeepers; but the usages of the churches of Milan, Naples, Syracuse, and Ravenna did not at the same time correspond with those of Rome.

For the vast church at Constantinople, A. D. 530, Justinian prescribed the following officers: sixty presbyters, one hundred deacons, forty deaconesses, ninety sub-deacons, one hundred and ten readers, and twenty-five singers; in all, four hundred and twenty-five, besides one hundred door-keepers, *ostiarii*.

From all these authorities the inference clearly is, that the distinction of *superior* and *inferior* clergy was recognised in all the churches, though there was no uniform rule of division.

In this connection it is important also to take notice of the different classifications which prevail in the several great divisions of the church.

In the Greek church, the officers were as follow: 1. Bishops;



2. Priests; 3. Deacons; 4. Sub-deacons, and 5. Readers, to which class the singers and acolyths also belonged.

The episcopal hierarchy itself consisted of three orders: archbishops, metropolitans, and patriarchs. To these another officer, still higher, was sometimes added, styled *exarch*. The ecclesiastical court of Russia is styled the Holy Synod. Its organization corresponds with that of the modern Greek church in Russia.<sup>4</sup>

The Syriac and Nestorian churches affect to copy after the heavenly hierarchy, and to compare their officers with those of the court of heaven. The Nestorians compare their patriarchs, metropolitans, and bishops with the orders of Cherubim, Seraphim, and Thrones; their archdeacons, pastoral priests, and preachers with angels of the second rank, styled Virtues, Powers, and Dominations; their deacons, sub-deacons, and readers with those of the *third rank*, viz. Princedoms, Archangels, and Angels.<sup>5</sup>

The Roman Catholics of the Western church, in general, abide firmly by the principle established by the schoolmen, that the priesthood is to consist of *seven* classes, corresponding to the seven spirits of God. Of these, the three who are chiefly employed in the duties of the ministerial office compose the superior order; and the four, whose duty it is to wait upon the clergy in their ministrations and to assist in conducting public worship, belong to the inferior order.

The canonists divide the priesthood into *nine classes*; of which four belong to the higher order, and five to the lower. The following is a catalogue of the several classes as given by them, proceeding from the lowest to the highest: Of the *inferior order*—1. Singers; 2. Doorkeepers; 3. Readers; 4. Exorcists; 5. Acolyths. Of the *superior order*—6. Sub-deacons; 7. Deacons; 8. Presbyters; 9. Bishops.<sup>6</sup>

The classification according to the scholastics of the Roman Catholic church is as follows: Of the superior order, *three*—1. Presbyters, or priests; 2. Deacons; 3. Sub-deacons. Of the inferior order, *four*—1. Acolyths; 2. Exorcists; 3. Readers; 4. Doorkeepers. This classification of the inferior order was established by the Council of Trent; but another of a subordinate rank is sometimes added.<sup>7</sup>

The second Council of Toletum, A. D. 531, provides that children of tender age may be devoted to the ministry; and that, after having been duly instructed, if of blameless morals, they may, after passing through the inferior orders, be advanced to the supe-

rior, by appointment to the office of deacon, presbyter, or bishop. The inferior orders of the clergy thus became a kind of seminary from which the churches were supplied with candidates for the ministry.

IV. *Origin of the distinction between Bishops and Presbyters, as separate orders of the clergy.*—According to Hilary of Rome, in the middle of the fourth century, the distinction was the result of an ambitious strife for preferment and office on the part of certain of the clergy, who, by talent and influence gaining a leading influence among their fellow-presbyters, began proudly to claim superiority over them as a distinct order of the priesthood, and, by this means, finally acquired for themselves *official* consideration and importance, which was, at first, the result of accidental circumstances.\*

Jerome ascribes the origin of these prerogatives to the *ambition of the priesthood*. It was a fruitless expedient to put an end to the ambitious contentions of the clergy for preferment one above another, and to quiet their discussions.† In either case, episcopacy, according to these ancient authors, had its origin in the bad passions of the priesthood, and evinces their early departure from the spirit of Christ, &c.

These and many other causes, doubtless, operating, some with less and others with greater power in different churches, gave rise to episcopacy at an early period; and the institution of the episcopal system soon wrought almost a total change in the constitution of the church. This change is apparent in the rise of a multitude of officers in the church and in the ministry, resulting from the establishment of the episcopal prerogatives. But the opinions of the learned respecting the origin of the episcopacy have been exhibited in another place. It only remains, in this connection, to subjoin the date which is generally assigned to the commencement of the official distinction between bishops and presbyters.

\* Apud omnes gentes utique honorabilis est senectus, unde et synagoga et postea ecclesia seniores habuit, quorum sine consilio nihil agebatur. Quod qua negligentia obsoleverit, nescio, nisi fortè doctorum dissidio, aut magis *superbia* dum soli volunt aliquid videri.—*In Tim.* v. 5.

† Antequam diaboli instinctu studia in religione fierent, et diceretur in populis, ego sum Pauli, ego autem Cephæ, communi presbyterorum consilio ecclesiæ gubernabantur. Postquam vero unusquisque eos quos baptizaverat suos putabat esse, non Christi, in toto orbe decretum est ut unus de presbyteris electus superponeretur cæteris, ad quem omnis ecclesiæ cura pertineret, et schismatum semina tollerentur.—*In Tit.* i. 1.

After the decease of the apostles, the authority of such as had enjoyed their personal instructions, like Polycarp, Papias, and Clement of Rome, would naturally be received with great respect. A peculiar veneration may also be supposed to belong to them, and to the churches founded by the apostles over which these, their immediate successors, presided. So far as such incidental circumstances are to be regarded as the germ of the episcopacy, the causes which gave rise to it may date back to the time of the apostles. But beyond this there is no satisfactory evidence that any one assumed or exercised the office of bishop earlier than a hundred years from the age of the apostles; in the last half of the second century. For a hundred years later, until the fourth century, the bishop continued only to administer the affairs of the church in connection with his fellow-presbyters, by and with their consent and advice. The idea of the co-ordinate authority of presbyters and bishops continued for several centuries later.\*

The specifications which follow relate to the bishop when fully invested with his prerogatives as head of the church and presiding officer over the different orders of the clergy.

## § 2. OF BISHOPS.

I. *Names and titles of Bishops.*—The Greek word, ἐπίσκοπος, which has from the beginning been retained in the nomenclature of the church, is equivalent to the terms *overseer*, *superintendent*, *inspector*, *president*. Augustin defines it to mean *overseer*, *president*. Jerome renders it *superintendent*; both, however, uniformly employ the original word. It is worthy of notice, also, that the presbyters are likewise exhorted in the Scriptures to exercise the same spiritual functions as the bishops, ἐπισκοποῦντες, *taking the oversight* of the churches. (1 Pet. v. 1, 2.)

The following are the most important names which were anciently applied to the bishops. The period from which these titles severally take their origin is indicated by the age of the authors cited in the references.

1. Πρεσβύτεροι προσετώτες, (1 Tim. v. 17;) προϊστάμενοι, (1 Thess. v. 12,) rendered in Latin *prepositi*, and used to designate

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\* The authorities on this point have been collected by Rothe, *Die Anfänge der Christlichen Kirche*, i. 208, *et seq.*, the most important of which will be found in *Prim. Church*, chap. vi. pp. 124, 244.

them as the *presiding officers* in Christian assemblies. The Greek fathers are careful to add the phrase *spiritual*, *πνευματικοί* or *πνευματικῶν χοροῦ*, to distinguish them from secular rulers.<sup>1</sup>

2. *Πρόεδροι*, *præsides*, *præsidentes*. Used in close connection with the foregoing, and derived from the *προεδρία*, the elevated seat which the bishop occupied in the synod, and in the religious assemblies of the people.<sup>2</sup>

3. *Ἐφοροί*, *inspectors*. Not often used, because it is liable to be confounded with the *ἐφοροί* of the Greeks. Both the Greek and Latin term is much in use among Protestants to designate the principal of a school, or corporation, or church, and is synonymous with church or school inspector, or master of a gymnasium.

4. *Ἀπόστολοι*, *apostles*. So called by Theodoret to distinguish them from presbyters, who were called *ἐπίσκοποι*.<sup>3</sup> Also, *Διάδοχοι τῶν ἀποστόλων*, *vicarii*, or *successors of the apostles*.<sup>4</sup> On this title now depends the important dogma concerning the perpetual and uninterrupted succession of bishops which, not only the Greek and Romish churches, but a portion also of the church of England, maintain with singular pertinacity.

The doctrine of the *apostolical succession* is purely a creation of prelacy unknown to the primitive churches. Ignatius is of no authority: none of the apostolical fathers teach it. The passage of Clement, in his epistle to the Corinthians, c. 44, so often cited, refers to the ordinary ministry. Cyprian, at the distance of two hundred years from the apostolic age, is the first to assert this dogma.\* After Cyprian, it is affirmed by Ambrose, Augustin, Basil, Jerome, and Theodoret, and from them it has been transmitted through every succeeding age. Even now it assumes to unchurch the whole Christian ministry, unless episcopally ordained by one who has received the mysterious grace of apostolical succession.

5. *Angeli ecclesiæ*, angels of the church. An epithet derived from the angel of the church, in the Apocalypse. It was a doctrine of great antiquity, that some angel in heaven acted as the representative of every nation and kingdom and province, and that some guardian angel was intrusted with the care of each individual. (Heb. i. 14.) The bishops, therefore, who were appointed by Christ and his apostles to the ministry of the gospel and the service of the saints, were supposed to bear the same relations in the

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\* Laborare debemus, ut unitatem a Domino, et per apostolos nobis, *successoribus* traditam obtinere curemus.—*Epist. ad Cornel.* 42, al. 45. Comp. *Ep.* 69, al. 66, ad Florent.

hierarchy of the church that these tutelary angels bore in the court of heaven. On the subject of guardian angels, see references.<sup>5</sup>

6. *Summi sacerdotes, pontifices maximi*, chief priests, etc. These titles were conferred by those writers who, in the third century, began to derive the organization of the church from the regulations of the *temple service*, rather than from those of the synagogue. They afterwards became the titles of the patriarchs and bishops of the Roman Catholics.

7. *Patres, patres ecclesiæ, patres clericorum*, and *patres patrum*, "fathers, fathers of the church, fathers of the clergy, fathers of fathers;" according to the oriental custom of calling a teacher or superior,  $\alpha\beta\beta\alpha$  and  $\alpha\beta\beta\alpha\varsigma$ , *father*.

*Abba* and *abbas* was originally the common appellation of a monk. Modern usage also confers upon him the name of father.

*Papa, pope*, corresponds in signification with  $\alpha\beta\beta\alpha$ ,  $\pi\alpha\pi\alpha$ , *father, honoured father*, and is a familiar and affectionate form of expression which was applied at first to all bishops. Tertullian bestows this appellation upon the bishop.<sup>6</sup> Cyprian was addressed by the same title.<sup>7</sup> Siricius was probably the first Roman bishop who, about the year 384, assumed the name as an official title in a public document.<sup>8</sup> It was not, however, employed officially until the time of Leo the Great, A. D. 450; and it was afterwards applied exclusively to the bishop of Rome, according to an order of Gregory the Great, A. D. 590, who declares this to be the only appropriate title belonging to the office.

8. *Patriarchs*. At first, all bishops were called by this name, as being superior to the presbyters, who were merely denominated *patres*. It was afterwards only applied to the archbishop and metropolitan, or to the bishop of some large and influential diocese. Between the fourth and sixth centuries, five large churches arose, whose highest ecclesiastical officer bore the title of patriarch. These were the churches of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Theophilus or Antioch, and Jerusalem.

9. *Stadtholders and vicegerents of Christ and of God*. From the time of Ignatius and the date of the Apostolical Constitutions, the bishops were represented to have received their commissions from Christ himself, and, in his name, to administer the affairs of the church. Cyprian speaks of the bishop as acting "*vice Christi*," in the place of Christ. Basil represents him as occupying the place of the Saviour:<sup>9</sup> "the president is nothing less than one who



sustains the person, ὁ τοῦ Σωτῆρος ὑπέχων πρόσωπον, who occupies the place of the Saviour;" and Augustin and Ambrose employ much the same extravagant language. So early did the church forget the Saviour's injunction, "Call no man master."

The pope, in styling himself vicar of Christ, vicegerent of God, etc., only arrogated as exclusively his own, what had previously been a common appellation of bishops.

10. Ἀρχοντες ἐκκλησιῶν, *rulers of the church*. So Origen, Eusebius, Chrysostom, Jerome, and others. They were rulers, however, not in a political, but merely in a *religious* sense.

11. *Princeps sacerdotum*, and *Episcopus episcoporum*, are synonymous with archbishop, patriarch, etc.

12. Various other epithets are applied to them, such as *blessed*, *most blessed*—*holy*, *most holy*—*most beloved of God*, etc. The usual salutation of a letter was as follows: Τῷ ἁγιοτάτῳ καὶ μακαροτάτῳ ἀρχιεπισκόπῳ καὶ οἰκουμενικῷ πατριάρχει.

II. *Official duties of the Bishop*.—The office of bishop comprehended, in general, two different classes of duties.

A. *All those that relate to the worship of God*. This division comprises all the offices of religious worship without exception, whether performed by the bishop in person, or by others acting under his commission.

B. *Duties relating to the government and discipline of the church*. Under this class is comprised the oversight in all the churches of his diocese, both of the laity and the priesthood; and the management of the affairs of the several churches which were submitted to his care.

These separate divisions require each a careful examination.

A. In regard to duties pertaining to religious worship, we are to distinguish carefully between the *right* or *vocation*, and the actual exercise of the duties consequent upon this vocation. In the earliest period of the church, while yet the greatest simplicity of form prevailed, and before any determinate distinction was known between bishop and presbyter, many services relating to the worship of God were prescribed to the deacons and ministers, διακόνοις and ὑπηρέταις, who were already known in the New Testament. According to Justin Martyr,<sup>10</sup> it was the duty of the minister, ὁ προσεστώς τῶν ἀδελφῶν, synonymous with ἐπίσκοπος, ἀρχιερεύς, ἱεράρχης, to consecrate the elements. To the deacons belonged the duty of distributing them. The same distribution of the services is also prescribed in the Apostolical Constitutions.<sup>11</sup> Other duties are

also assigned to the deacons and subordinate officers of the church, to be performed, however, by the direction or under the immediate oversight of the bishop.

Some of the offices and duties mentioned below were not exclusively performed by the bishop. They were, however, appropriately his own, whether fulfilled by himself or by another under his authority or superintendence as commissioned by him.

1. *It was especially the duty of the bishop to perform the offices of catechist and preacher.* It was a maxim of the ancient church that the peculiar office of the bishop is to *teach the people*.<sup>\*</sup> This duty was distinctly acknowledged and actually performed by Chrysostom, Gregory Nazianzen, Cyprian, Augustin, Leo the Great, Gregory the Great, and others. Such was not only the sentiment of the church generally, but Charlemagne and Louis I. expressly enjoin the bishops not to neglect this important part of their official duties on any plea of ignorance or indolence.<sup>12</sup> The same duty is explicitly taught by the Council of Trent in the following terms, and in perfect accordance with the views of the primitive church: "Whereas the preaching of the gospel, which is the peculiar office of bishops, is as essential to every Christian community as the reading of the word; therefore, this sacred synod has determined and decreed that all bishops, archbishops, and primates, and all other prelates of the churches, are themselves required and personally bound to preach the blessed gospel of Jesus Christ, unless specially prevented, *legitime prohibiti*."<sup>13</sup>

Such, beyond all controversy, is the *duty* of those who sustain the office of bishop; though their *practice* has, at times, been altogether the reverse of this, and still is in part. Occasionally, even in the ancient church, the bishops, through the pressure of secular cares, neglected entirely their ministerial duties. At other times, they refused, in the pride of office, their duties as preachers and catechists, and the more humble duties of the sacred office, as derogatory to their character. But at no time has the right and the duty of the bishop to discharge all the offices of the ministry been called in question. The act of ordination, of itself, and according to the canons of the church, exclusively invests them with *all* the offices and prerogatives of the priesthood.

2. *The confirmation of baptized persons, by which they are re-*

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<sup>\*</sup> Episcopi proprium munus—docere populum.—AMBROSE, *De Offic. Sacer.* lib. i. c. i.

ceived as regular members of the church. This, which is styled the sealing of the covenant, was the prerogative of the bishop.\* This rite is still performed in the Roman Catholic and English churches by the bishop himself or his substitute. In other churches, the priest is permitted to administer this ordinance.

3. *The ordination of the clergy, and consecration of other officers of the church.* It has been a uniform rule of the church, both in ancient and modern times, to which there have been only occasional exceptions, that the right of ordaining belongs to the bishop. The substitute was regarded as acting strictly in the *place* of the bishop, and in this way the bishop gained peculiar influence and consideration. The archdeacon is sometimes represented as officiating in the ordination of inferior officers; but he is to be regarded as acting, in such cases, in the place of the bishop, so that what he does by another he does of himself. Three bishops were required to assist in the ordination of one to that office; but some of the higher officers in other orders of the clergy were subsequently permitted to assist in this service.

4. *The consecration of the sacramental elements.* This was done, in the time of Justin Martyr by the *προεστὼς τῶν ἀδελφῶν*, the presiding officer of the church, and became, subsequently, the duty exclusively of the bishop. It was, indeed, frequently performed by presbyters, and even by deacons, but only in the absence of the bishop, and by his authority. Whenever either presbyter or deacon presumed to perform this office, it was severely censured as an assumption of an episcopal prerogative.†

III. *Of the power of the bishop in the government and discipline of the church after the establishment of the hierarchy.*—It was a favourite sentiment in the church, after the establishment of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, that all power centered in the bishop as a universal hierarch—that all the clergy were subject to his authority—that all spiritual benefices and preferments proceeded from him, and that all the sacraments were to be administered in his

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\* Pontificibus solis deberi ut vel consignant, vel paraclitum Spiritum tradant, non solum consuetudo ecclesiæ demonstrat, verum et lectio Actorum Apostolorum.—INNOCENT I., *Ad Decret.* c. i. s. 3. Comp. Innocent II. *Epist.* 73. Quid facit, *excepta ordinatione*, episcopus quod presbyter non facit?—HIERON. *Ad Evag.* 85. Comp. Conc. Antioch. c. 22.

† Pepin's decree, A. D. 755, is as follows:—Nullus presbyter præsumat missas celebrare sine jussione episcopi in cujus parochia est. The Council of Arles, A. D. 314, laid similar restrictions upon deacons.—*Can.* 15.

name and by a commission from him. Both the Apostolical Constitutions and the liturgy of the pseudo Dionysius, the Areopagite, represent that every thing relating to the worship of God, in all its parts, is the collective work of the bishop. But restrictions were early laid upon the authority of the bishop by regulations of the church, by synodical decisions, and by metropolitan, patriarchal, and papal decrees. By these regulations and decrees, the power of the bishop was, at times, greatly reduced. But, however limited his prerogatives, the bishop uniformly remained the source and centre of ecclesiastical authority within his own diocese. The diocesan clergy of every rank were dependent upon him, and by him were the regulations of the churches directed. His influence was especially manifested in the following particulars:

1. *In the superintendence of religious worship.* All the forms of public worship were subject to his direction. This direction he gave at pleasure, either in accordance with his own will, or in conformity with usage, or by rules more or less specific. It was his business to see that every thing was done according to the established order. Over occasional and peculiar religious acts, such as processions, pilgrimages, fasts, and vows, he had a special control.

2. *The oversight of all the members of his diocese in regard to spiritual and ecclesiastical matters.* This oversight he exercised by adjudicating, excommunicating, prescribing penance, and regulating the laws of the marriage institution. The doings of the priest were especially open to an appeal to him and subject to his revision. In a word, all that related to the discipline of the church was subject to his control.

3. *The reconciling of penitents, or the restoration of offending members of the church.* It was the duty of the bishop to announce those who made profession of penitence—to receive them on probation—to prescribe the time and form of their penance, and to exercise a watch over them; though, in all this, the presbyter often co-operated with him, and even the whole church continued for some time to have a voice in its discipline. But to remove the sentence of excommunication was, in the ancient church, the especial prerogative of the bishop, which was very seldom delegated to a presbyter or any other. In this respect, the authority of the bishop was absolute over even the monarch upon his throne. Ambrose boldly forbade Theodosius the emperor to receive the Lord's supper at his hands; and, after prescribing to him a severe penance,



restored him, on confession, to the communion of the church.<sup>14</sup> On the introduction of the forms of confession and private absolution, the whole system of penance previously in use was changed, but there still remained much to be administered publicly by the bishop.

4. *All the subordinate members of the priesthood, and the servants in the church, were subject to the superintendence of the bishops*, both as to the discharge of their offices and the conduct of their lives. It was an ancient rule in the church, that the clergy are under the same subjection to the bishop as the soldier to his commander. History, indeed, abounds with examples of severe punishment inflicted upon a refractory and disobedient priesthood.\*

5. *It was the specific duty of the bishop to visit curates, churches, schools, cloisters, and religious establishments.* Many rules of the church enforce this duty upon the bishops personally, and it was with reluctance allowed to the bishop to appoint to this service rural bishops, *chorepiscopi*, exarchs, and itinerant or visiting presbyters, *περιοδευταί*. The Council of Laodicea, in the middle of the fourth century, decreed that bishops should not reside in the country or smaller villages, but itinerant presbyters only, and that these should do nothing without the knowledge of the bishop residing in the city, just as presbyters acted in subordination to his will. Under the Carlovingian dynasty, bishops and counts of the realm were placed on equal footing, and exercised a joint jurisdiction.

6. *The bishop acted as moderator of all synods within his diocese, and gave direction to their doings.* This was formerly a privilege of great importance. The disrespect into which synodical councils and decrees have fallen, in modern times, has greatly reduced the authority and influence of the bishops. Ecclesiastical councils are supposed to have been first held in the Greek church, towards the close of the second century.

7. *The bishop controlled and disbursed, at pleasure, both the occasional contributions and the stated revenues of the church.* The deacons, at first, acted as his assistants in the business; but as the management of the revenue became more intricate and responsible, it was intrusted to stewards, subject to the direction of

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\* Cum pro episcopatus vigore, et cathedræ auctoritate haberes potestatem qua posses de illo statim vindicari—fungeris circa eum potestate honoris tui, ut eum vel deponas, vel abstineas. Such is Cyprian's counsel to Rogatian, a fellow bishop, respecting the exercise of his episcopal power in the discipline of a disorderly deacon.—Ep. 65, al. 3. Comp. Ep. 12, al. 3, 13 al. 18.



the *archdeacons*, over whom the bishop retained a general superintendence.

8. *The bishop exercised, in part, a civil as well as ecclesiastical jurisdiction*, especially in cases relating to marriages and divorces, and to the person or goods of ecclesiastics,\* and in what are called *mixed cases*, in civil or penal actions, which are to be adjudged both by statute and by common law. At first, there were certain justices, *ἐκδίκτοι* and *σύνδικοι*, *advocati* and *consules*, who acted as his substitutes and in his name. Special tribunals were established here, as occasion required, for the management of his various judicial concerns. Such was the origin of the office of deputies, officials, and chancellor, and of the courts of the archdeacons and consistories. But these all acted in the name and by the authority of the bishop, and were accountable to him.

Such various functions of the bishop, clerical, financial, and judicial, invested him with authority and power which can never be safely committed to any man, either in church or state. The bishop was the autocrat of the church, and often abused his power for the accomplishment of selfish, sinister ends. Of chapters of cathedral churches, nothing was then known. These were first established in the ninth century. From the twelfth, they had a constitution which, while it laid some salutary restrictions on the arbitrary powers of the bishop, brought the church under the control of a dangerous aristocracy. The bishop continued to be nominally the head of his chapter; but his efforts to hold them under restraint proved often unavailing.

The bishop was chosen to his office in different ways, which are specified in a subsequent chapter on elections.

According to the Apostolical Constitutions, one was not eligible to the office of bishop until he was fifty years of age. The rule, however, was not generally observed. The canonical age for entering upon this office was thirty years;<sup>15</sup> but there are instances on record of persons who have been elevated to the bishop's seat at an earlier age.

The rites of consecration by which the bishop was inducted into office are detailed under the head of Ordination.

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\* Reference was had to 1 Cor. vi. 4 *et seq.*, for authority for the exercise of such powers. Augustin complains of such duties as exceedingly vexatious and oppressive.—*Oper. de Monarch.* c. 29.

## § 3. OF THE INFERIOR BISHOPS.

THE whole number of bishops in the early churches may be divided into two classes or orders—inferior and superior. To the first of these classes may be referred,

1. Ἐπίσκοποι σκολάζοντες, *vacui, vacantes, cessantes, quiescentes, bishops without cures*. To this class belong those who, for any cause, declined the duties of their office. In times of persecution and religious commotion, especially in the fourth and fifth centuries, many men of distinction refused to be considered candidates for the office of bishop, and even, when elected, declined the duties of the office. Others resigned who had been fully inducted into office; and others, again, not being acknowledged by their colleagues and dioceses, were subject to a compulsory resignation.

Under this head may also be ranked those bishops who, though they did not resign, absented themselves from their diocese for a length of time, and resided, without good reason, in other places. In the fourth and fifth centuries, it was not uncommon for ten or twelve bishops to relinquish the duties of their office, and resort to the court at Constantinople. These were deservedly accounted subordinate to their colleagues who continued in the faithful discharge of their duties.

2. *Titular bishops, Episcopi in partibus infidelium, Episcopi gentium, regionarii*. Bishops of this class were invested with their office, but had no stated charge or diocese. This title, in general use in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, was given to the bishops of those provinces which had been gained by the conquests of the cross, and which had long been held under the dominion of the Saracens and Turks. It is peculiarly a Popish expedient to appease the claimants for episcopal preferment. The appointment of titular dignitaries was opposed to the general usage of the ancient church; though instances of this unworthy custom occasionally occur in the history of the church. The Council of Chalcedon, A. D. 451, (c. 6,) decreed that no one should be ordained at large, ἀπολελυμένος.

3. *Suffragan bishops*. These were originally the same as diocesan bishops, who acted as the representatives and substitutes of their metropolitans. They were called suffragan, either because they could not be consecrated without the *suffrage* of the metropolitan, or because they had the right of suffrage in the synod,

while yet distinct from other members of that body. The latter is the more probable explanation of the term.

These suffragan bishops are not the same as the chorepiscopi;<sup>1</sup> but after the cessation of them, the necessity of suffragans became much greater, and they were accordingly increased. Bishops who had no metropolitan power, first began in the tenth century to have suffragans under them. These were also styled vicar-generals, vicegerents, *vice-episcopi*, etc.<sup>2</sup> The suffragan bishops of Germany were appointed for the ordination of inferior officers and the consecration and benediction of churches, altars, baptismal waters, etc.

4. *Country bishops*, χωρεπίσκοποι, from χώρα, or χωρίον, *country*; *Episcopi rurales*, s. *villani*. These bishops have been the subject of much dispute among the learned, and called forth a multitude of treatises and authors, ancient and modern. The office belonged to the ancient church, but is entirely unknown in the modern. The gospel was early preached in villages and towns, and churches established with pastors and teachers. These were styled χωρεπίσκοποι, bishops of *the country*, in distinction from bishops resident in the cities; but the rights and official duties of both were in many instances the same. In many cases, churches would naturally be established in the country around a large city, through the influence of the parent church in the city. These churches, and the ministers sent out to them, acknowledged a certain dependence and subordination to the bishop and church of the metropolis. So that the bishops in the country were more or less subordinate to those of the city, according to circumstances, though sustaining the relations of an official equality.

The existence of such country bishops, however, was soon found to be derogatory to the dignity and influence of the metropolitan. It was accordingly the earnest and zealous strife of this dignitary, in the councils, to subject the bishop of the country to the authority of the metropolitan, and finally to annihilate the office altogether. The Council of Sardica, A. D. 347, (c. 6,) decreed that such bishops should not be appointed, *ne vilescat nomen episcopi et auctoritas*. And the Council of Laodicea, A. D. 360, (c. 57,) renewed the same decree for a similar reason. Previous to this period their powers had become considerably restricted. They are styled συλλειτουργοί, fellow-labourers with the bishop; and, like the cardinals of later times, were reckoned seventy in number, which shows again that they, as well as the bishops, were compared with

the apostles in office.<sup>3</sup> The Council of Nice, (c. 8,) so speaks of them as to show that they held an intermediate grade between presbyters and bishops. Their duties were, to give letters of recommendation and the testimonials of the church; to take the oversight of the church in the section of country allotted to them; to appoint the readers, sub-deacons, and exorcists; and they might ordain presbyters and deacons, but not without the co-operation of the city bishop.<sup>4</sup> In the year 451, they voted, for the first time, as the substitutes or representatives of their bishops.<sup>5</sup> Previous to this time, they had an independent vote in general council, as in the Council of Nice, and in the presence of the city bishops.<sup>6</sup>

The office of *chor-episcopus* was first recognised and was also soonest discontinued in the Eastern church. In the Western church it shared a similar fate at a later period, and after a long and angry struggle with hierarchical supremacy. In France, this order of bishops began to be known about the fifth century. They have never been numerous in Spain and Italy. In Africa, on the contrary, they constitute a numerous body. In Germany, they must have been frequent in the seventh and eighth centuries;<sup>7</sup> and in the twelfth century, the arrogance, insubordination, and injurious conduct of this class of ecclesiastics became a subject of general complaint in the Western church, but more especially in France. In the East, the order was abolished for the same reasons by the Council of Laodicea, A. D. 361. But so little respect was entertained for this decree that the order continued until the tenth century. They were first prohibited in the Western church in the ninth century.<sup>8</sup> About the twelfth century they disappeared from the page of history, and were succeeded by archdeacons, rural-deans, and vicar-generals.

5. *Visitors*, *περιοδευταί*, *itinerant presbyters*. They were, at first, appointed by the Council of Laodicea in the room of the *chor-episcopi*, in the fourth century; but they were not recognised as a distinct order until some centuries later. Their business was that of itinerant ministers, or evangelists, to minister to the churches in the name and under the authority of the bishop, going about continually to guard the wavering and to confirm the faithful. But it was their peculiar characteristic that they had no fixed abode. They had not the independent prerogatives of the country bishops, but were merely vicarious assistants of the bishop—like a visiting committee of the church, or the *visitores ecclesiarum* of the Latin church.<sup>9</sup>

6. *Intercessors, intercessores, and interventores.* Officers peculiar to the African church, who are first mentioned in the Fifth Council of Carthage. They were temporary incumbents of a vacant bishopric, and, for the time being, performed the several offices of bishop. It was their duty to take measures for the regular appointment of a bishop as speedily as possible. To prevent abuse, no one was allowed to continue in office more than one year.

#### § 4. OF THE SUPERIOR BISHOPS.

1. *Of Archbishops, Ἀρχιεπισκόποι.* They are not the same as metropolitans, as has frequently been supposed. The two have ever been distinct in the Eastern church, and usually in the Western. The archbishop is, in the age to which he belongs, the highest functionary, and as such presides over both metropolitans and bishops.\* The bishops of larger cities, such as Alexandria, Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, etc., gained an ascendancy, in the fourth and fifth centuries, over the bishops and metropolitans of smaller towns, and received the name of archbishops to denote this superiority. The title was officially conferred by the Council of Ephesus, A. D. 431;<sup>1</sup> but in the preceding century was conferred upon the bishop of Alexandria by Athanasius;<sup>2</sup> and, previous to this, appears to have been used interchangeably with other titles of respect towards eminent bishops of the larger cities and presidents of provincial synods, but without designating any official superiority. But it prevailed only until the introduction of the Jewish title, *patriarch*, to which the name of archbishop gave place.

2. *Of Metropolitans.* The pastors of those churches which were founded by the apostles, especially if those pastors had themselves been inducted into their charge by the apostles, may be presumed from these circumstances to have shared largely in the respect of their contemporaries. Their age and talents and commanding influence at the head of the church in the metropolis would naturally give them a controlling influence over the neighbouring and dependent pastors and churches, and in their early synodical councils.

As early as the latter part of the second century, Eusebius

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\* Archiepiscopus græce dicitur summus episcoporum; præsidet tam metropolitans quam episcopis cæteris. Metropolitani singulis provinciis præsident.—ISIDOR. SEVILL., *Orig.* lib. vii. 21.



speaks of Philip as bishop of Gortyna and the other churches of Crete,<sup>3</sup> and of Irenæus as having the oversight of the churches of Gaul;<sup>4</sup> but the name of metropolitan does not occur until the fourth century: instead of this, the titles of eminence for the bishops were κεφαλὴ, ἑξαρχος ἐπαρχίας, *princeps sacerdotum*, *summus sacerdos*, *primates*, *senes*, &c., which, after the Council of Nice defined the prerogatives of metropolitans, came into frequent use.<sup>5</sup> These circumstances may, as early as the third century or the latter part of the second, have conferred upon the bishop of the metropolis, as a voluntary concession, what he afterwards claimed as his right—the right of pre-eminence.

The metropolitan, as an official dignitary of the church, is first announced at the Council of Nice in the fourth century, but in such a connection as to indicate that the title was of an earlier date. The metropolitan government was introduced earlier and more fully developed in the Eastern than in the Western churches. The churches of Africa were particularly opposed to this system; but the diocesan finally gave place to the metropolitan system throughout the Christian church.

It was the prerogative of the metropolitan to exercise authority over the bishops of the provinces,\* to adjudicate on complaints of presbyters and other orders of the clergy respecting their bishops; to regulate the liturgy of the church; to convene and to preside over synodical councils, and to direct the common and public affairs of the church.<sup>6</sup>

3. *Primates*, πρώτοι, πρωτεύοντες ἐπισκοπῶν. This title is not, as many suppose, derived from an ancient civil office in Rome. The term *primas urbis*, *castelli*, *palatii*, etc., primate of the city, palace, etc., is of much later origin, and, probably, was itself derived at first from the church. Bishops, venerable for their age or personal dignity, and those who held offices over other dignitaries of the church, were called primates. The distinction, however, between *titular* or *honorary* primates and *primates in power*, was very early made. In Africa, the primate was the same as *episcopus primæ sedis*, first in rank; and the bishop of Carthage was styled Primate of all Africa. The term *primate* was often the same in signification as archbishop, metropolitan, and patriarch.

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\* Si quempiam vestrum, pro causis propriis, ubicunque compulerit ambulare necessitas ab eodem metropolitano vestro petere cessionem debeat. — GREG. M. lib. vii. Ep. 8.

The appellation of primate was in use only in the Western church.

4. *Exarchs*. These were, in the Eastern church, the same as the primates in the Western church. The bishops of Ephesus, Hæraclea, Cæsarea in Cappadocia, together with those of Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch, especially preserved this title. It was their duty to consecrate their metropolitans.

5. *Absolute or independent bishops*, ἀκέφαλοι and αὐτοκέφαλοι, not subject to the authority of a superior. Such were all bishops and metropolitans who had the independent control of their dioceses. It was not in frequent use, because the Monophysites claimed the same title in another, but kindred sense. According to Bingham, the four following classes received this title: 1. All metropolitans, anciently. 2. Some metropolitans who remained independent after the establishment of the patriarchal power, such as those of Cyprus, Iberia, Armenia, and Britain. 3. Such bishops as acknowledged no subjection to metropolitans, but only to the patriarch of the diocese. 4. Such as were wholly independent of all others, and acknowledged no superior whatever.<sup>7</sup> In reality, however, none but the pope, in the height of his supremacy, can with propriety be said to be ἀκέφαλος or αὐτοκέφαλος. The independent bishops of the Western church were so only in regard to their archbishops and primates; and even the archbishop of the church of Ravenna, who for a long time refused to surrender his independence, submitted at last to the apostolic see.<sup>8</sup>

6. *Patriarchs*. Few topics of antiquity have been so much the subject of strife among the learned as this, relating to the patriarchs of the ancient church.<sup>9</sup> But it will be sufficient for our purpose, to take only a brief view of the points in question.

This term was originally applied to the archbishop, and to any bishop as a token of respect. It first occurs in the Council of Constantinople, A. D. 381, as an official title, and again in the Council of Chalcedon; and in the course of this seventy years, the strict and limited title was established; but it was not made the title of a distinct office until near the middle of the fifth century. The title was borrowed from the Jews, who, after the destruction of Jerusalem, styled the primates of their church *patriarchs*; and when this office became extinct among the Jews, the title was conferred upon the dignitaries of the Christian church. According to Jerome, the Montanists and Cataphygians had already appropriated this title previous to that event.<sup>10</sup>

The bishops of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem particularly were called patriarchs. Several councils had bestowed upon these bishops peculiar marks of distinction,<sup>11</sup> which encouraged them proudly to assume this title. Agreeably to the design of Theodosius the Great, Constantinople maintained her proud prerogative, and became a second Rome in ecclesiastical power and dignity. These high pretensions of her rival, Rome herself reluctantly saw; Alexandria and Antioch uniformly protested against them; Jerusalem retained, indeed, her empty honours, but not her patriarchal rights and privileges. The Romanists are careful to say that there were at first five patriarchs in the church, that those of Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch were deservedly so called, *per se et ex natura*; but that those of Constantinople and Jerusalem were by mere accident, *per accidens*, graced with this title.

In the sixth century, Rome and Constantinople engaged in a bitter strife for the title of imperial patriarch, *πατριάρχης τῆς οἰκουμένης*, *universalis ecclesiæ papa*. But the primate of Rome finally ended the controversy by resigning the title of patriarch, and assuming only that of pope, *papa*, or *pontifex maximus*.

The following summary of the prerogatives of the patriarch is given by Bingham, (book ii. chap. 17): 1. "They were to ordain all the metropolitans of their own diocese, and to receive their own ordination from a diocesan synod. 2. To call diocesan synods and to preside over them. 3. To receive appeals from metropolitans and provincial synods. 4. To censure metropolitans and their suffragan bishops, if metropolitans were remiss in censuring them. 5. They might delegate metropolitans, as their commissioners, to hear ecclesiastical causes in any part of the diocese. 6. They were to be consulted by metropolitans in all matters of moment. 7. To communicate to their metropolitans such imperial laws as concerned the church, and the metropolitans were to notify the provincial bishops. 8. Absolution of great criminals was reserved to them.<sup>12</sup> 9. They were absolute, and independent one of another.

The patriarchal system was the last stage in the progress of the hierarchy previous to the development of the papal system. Every advance in the centralizing of the power of the episcopate, from an humble presbyter up to the highest dignitary of the church, was only a wider departure from the primitive constitution of the church as it was framed by the apostles, and only prepared the way for that masterly and final stride of priestly cunning and

usurpation which concentrated all power, spiritual and temporal, in the person of the pope of Rome. No craving of the human heart is more strongly written than that after power. The entire history of the constitution of the church, from the simple form which it received at the hands of the apostles, through the parochial, diocesan, metropolitan, and patriarchal, is but a record of these insatiable cravings, until they were consummated in the papal system.

### § 5. THE PAPAL SYSTEM.

THE rise of this system belongs to a period later than that to which the antiquities of the Christian church is usually restricted; but it is so clearly connected with this subject as to require a brief notice. It is the completion of that centralization of spiritual power which early began to abridge the free and popular spirit of the primitive church, and ultimately sought to concentrate all power, spiritual and temporal, in the pope, as the absolute and supreme head of the church on earth, and vicegerent of God himself.

The bishops of Rome and Constantinople had begun an eager and angry strife for the mastery, each aspiring with insatiable ambition, and watching and striving with restless energy to establish his claim, over that of his rival, as supreme head of the church. The result of this unworthy controversy between these dignitaries of the church was the establishment of the supremacy of the pope of Rome as the head of an *absolute monarchy* in the church—a spiritual despotism which completed the total subversion of that organization which the church received from the apostles as a free and independent body.

This is the important period in history when the first foundation was laid for rendering the hierarchy of the church independent both of the clergy and of the secular power. This period has not been noticed so particularly by historians as its importance requires. They seem especially to have overlooked the fact that the famous Hildebrand, who in the year 1073 became Gregory VII., concerted these measures for the independence of the church, as the following extract will show: "It was the deep design of Hildebrand, which he for a long time prosecuted with unwearied zeal, to bring the pope wholly within the pale of the church, and to prevent the interference, in his election, of all secular influence and arbitrary power. And that measure of the council which wrested from the

emperor a right of long standing, and which had never been called in question, may deservedly be regarded as the masterpiece of Popish intrigue, or rather of Hildebrand's cunning. The concession which disguised this crafty design of his, was expressed as follows:—That the emperor should continue to hold, as he ever had held, the right of confirming the election of the pope, *derived from him*. The covert design of this clause was not perceived; but it expressed nothing less than—*that the emperor should ever receive and hold, from the pope himself, the right of confirming the appointment of the pope!*”

As might have been expected, the lofty claim of the pope was resisted; but he had the address to defend his usurped authority against all opposition, and proudly proclaimed himself “the successor of St. Peter, set up by God to govern, not only the church, but the whole world.”

The peculiar costume of the pope is—1, a white robe; 2, purple slippers, with a cross of golden embroidery inwrought; 3, a hood, or cowl, falling over the ears; 4, a crimson surplice; 5, a chasuble; 6, a girdle; 7, the robe with three crosses and ornamented with precious stones; 8, the scarlet mantle; and, 9, a mitre.

The rights and prerogatives of the pope are extremely various and comprehensive, some of which are as follows:—He claims the right to bind the church universal to a strict unity in faith and practice; to hold all bishops and officers of the church accountable to him for their faith and practice; to send nuncios and delegates to any province to take the oversight of the church in his name; to summon councils, to preside over them, and enforce their decrees; to act as a final court of appeal in questions relating to the welfare of the church; to excommunicate heretical bishops and churches; to institute new dioceses and take the government of vacant ones by his own vicars; to absolve from obligation to obedience to previous decrees of popes and councils; to establish the fasts and festivals of the church; and to control its missionary operations and its finances. “The Roman pontiff's power is civil as well as ecclesiastical, extending both to the church and to the state; and legislative as well as executive, comprehending in its measureless range both the making and enforcing of laws. He is clothed with uncontrolled authority over the church, the clergy, councils, and kings. He has a right, both in a legislative and executive capacity, to govern the universal church, and to ordain, judge, suspend, and depose bishops, metropolitans, and patriarchs, through



Christendom. These receive their authority from the pope, as he does his from God."

Thus the beautiful and sublime simplicity of the Christian system has, for a thousand years, been continually sacrificed by attempts to improve—to build upon it. Thus its progress has been continually impeded by loading its movements with immeasurable additions of man's invention, until, at length, at an infinite remove from the lives and teachings of Christ and his apostles, papacy, that masterpiece of cunning among the inventions of men, rears aloft its impious head, the sole representative of the church of Christ on earth!

### § 6. OF PRESBYTERS, OR ELDERS.

1. *Origin and meaning of the term.*—The word *presbyter* signifies, properly, *an elder*, that is, an aged person. In the New Testament, and by early ecclesiastical writers, it is used as a title of office or dignity, and denotes superiority, not so much *in age* as in office. It is expressive, not merely of age, but preferment in dignity and office. In the Jewish synagogue, elders were chosen, not by their age, but for their wisdom and qualifications for their office. So, in the Christian church, an elder or presbyter is one who is chosen or appointed to a certain office, not by reason of his age, but of his qualifications for the duties of the station in which he is placed.

This name appears, at first, to have denoted, in the Christian church, persons appointed to rule, to govern. The זְבִינִים, or elders, in the synagogue, were rulers, overseers, governors. But the duties of a governor and teacher may be easily combined, and were, in fact, united in the elders of the church. The apostles styled themselves elders and fellow-elders, (2 John i.; 1 Pet. i. 2—comp. Philip. ii. 25,) and they were certainly rulers and teachers. The twofold nature of the office of elders, or presbyters, is fully implied in that passage in 1 Tim. v. 17, which has been the subject of so much criticism and of such various interpretation: "Let the elders that rule well be accounted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine."

It is generally admitted by episcopal writers on this subject that, in the New Testament and in the earliest ecclesiastical writers, the terms ἐπίσκοπος and πρεσβύτερος, bishops, presbyters or elders, are synonymous, and denote one and the same office. See Acts xx. 17, 28; Philip. i. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 1 *et seq.*; Tit. i. 5-7; and

compare Acts xv. 2, 4, c. xxii. xxiii.; 1 Cor. xii. 28-30; Eph. iv. 11.

The usage of ancient ecclesiastical writers, with reference to the original equality and identity of bishops and presbyters has already been duly indicated. From the earliest rise of episcopacy, presbyters, in common with bishops, were ordained as spiritual teachers; the succession and right of ordination being claimed as the exclusive superiority of bishops above presbyters, though the subordinate authority of the latter was of necessity implied.

2. *Presbyters in the apostolic age.* A just idea of the office of presbyters in the age of the apostles will be obtained by comparing it with that of the ruler of the synagogue. The Christian church was organized after the model of the Jewish synagogue; and its presiding officer was transferred to the church with little change in his duties, privileges, and prerogatives. It was the duty of the ruler of the synagogue to preside in its public assemblies, to discourse upon their laws, and to expound their sacred Scriptures, to take the oversight of the members of the synagogue, to instruct, to reprove, to rebuke, and, in connection with the synagogue, to administer its discipline. Such was also the primitive duty of the presbyter. He was the presiding officer, the pastor and instructor of the church. He was not, like an apostle and his delegate, an itinerating minister, having care over several churches, but restricted to the care of a single church. So the apostle John, when he had retired from the circuit of his labours in the churches, to take the stated charge of the church at Ephesus, styles himself, in his two last epistles, *the elder, the presbyter*, as being now the settled pastor of a single church.

The office of presbyter was, undeniably, identical with that of bishop, as has been shown above. He was invested with the same duties and functions as those of a primitive bishop. Like the bishop, it was, in the same manner and for the same reasons, the duty of the presbyter to teach and to preach, to preside over the church, to administer its ordinances and its discipline, to ordain, and generally to perform the duties and enjoy the prerogatives implied in the cure of souls.

After the usurpation by the bishop and concession to him of supremacy over presbyters, the influence and authority of the latter became greatly abridged. It varied also at various times and in different countries. The first characteristic prerogatives assumed by the bishops were the apostolical succession and the right to or-

dain. Scultet, after labouring to show at length that primitive episcopacy was not only ratified and established in the time of the apostles, but confirmed by the very Son of God, and, therefore, is of divine right, adds "that episcopacy had two things peculiar to it—the privilege of succeeding, and the prerogative of ordaining: all other things were common to them with presbyters."

But the bishop soon became the president and director of the whole course of public worship, and the administrator of all sacred offices. The presbyter, in the discharge of these offices, only acted as the delegate, representative, and vicar of the bishop, and was required to administer his duties in strict subserviency and obedience to the authority of the bishop.

3. *Equality of bishops and presbyters.* The original identity of bishops and presbyters in the primitive church is an historical fact so clearly established as to command the assent of many Episcopalians and prelatists of every age almost since the rise of the distinction between these two orders of the ministry. This position has been illustrated in another place<sup>1</sup> by a large induction of authorities, of which the following is but a very brief summary:

The terms bishops and presbyters are used interchangeably by the apostles and by the apostolic fathers succeeding them, whose genuine works remain with us. This interchange of these terms, as identical, continues far into the second century, and the same honorary titles are applied to each indiscriminately. When a distinction begins to be made, it is only that of *primus inter pares*—chief among equals, like that of a moderator of a council, or president of a senate. *Only two orders of officers are known in the church* until near the close of the second century. Those of the first are styled either bishops or presbyters; of the second, deacons.

We begin with Clement of Rome, about A. D. 90, the earliest of the apostolic fathers. Speaking of the apostles, he says, that, "preaching through the countries and cities, they appointed the first-fruits of their conversions to be *bishops* and *deacons* over those who should believe, having first proved them by the Spirit. Nor was this any new thing; since, long before, it was written concerning bishops and deacons."—Ad Cor. 42. Bishops and deacons are here the established ministers of the church. Again, section 44, in speaking of the ministerial office, he denominates it ἐπίσκοπία, *the episcopate*, the office of the ἐπίσκοπος, or bishop; and adds, that the apostles, having a perfect knowledge of the contentions which would arise about this office, appointed those whom he had

mentioned before, and gave direction that, thenceforward, when they should die, other approved men should succeed them in their office. "Blessed are the *presbyters*," he adds in the same connection, "who have been already discharged by death from this office." The same men, whom he here denominates *presbyters*, are those whom above he has just styled bishops.

Clement was, probably, the same whom Paul commends as one of his fellow-labourers "whose names are in the book of life." Nothing that is not Scripture can be of greater authority than his testimony on this point. He knows no distinction between bishops and *presbyters*.

Polycarp, the disciple and friend of St. John, is the next in order. This venerable apostolic father exhorts the Philippians, to whom he writes, "to be subject to the *presbyters* and *deacons* as unto God and to Christ." Again: "Let the *presbyters* be compassionate and merciful towards all, turning them from their errors."\* Like Clement, he makes mention of two orders of the clergy, of whom one order is that of *deacons*. The other order is denominated by the one, *bishops*; by the other, *presbyters*.

Justin Martyr, the Christian philosopher who suffered martyrdom, A. D. 165, two years before Polycarp, recognises only two orders of the ministry, *deacons* and the *προεστώτες*, *superiors*, *presidents*.<sup>2</sup>

Irenæus was, in his youth, a hearer of Polycarp, and died about A. D. 202. A native of Asia Minor, and, in the latter part of his life, pastor of the church at Lyons in France, he must have been well acquainted with the Eastern and Western churches. In specifying the apostolical succession of pastors over the church at Rome down to Victor, he styles them *presbyters*. Again he says—"Obedience should be rendered by the church to those *presbyters* whose succession is, as we have shown, from the apostles, and who, with their *episcopal succession*, have received the unerring gift of truth according to the good pleasure of the Father."† Bishops and *presbyters*, by this father, are used interchangeably as descriptive of

\* Διὸ δέον ἀπέχεσθαι ἀπὸ πάντων τούτων ὑποτασσόμενους τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις καὶ δακόνους ὡς Θεῷ καὶ Χριστῷ.—*Ad Phil.* c. 6.

† Eis, qui in ecclesia sunt, presbyteris obaudire oportet; his qui successionem habent ab apostolis, sicut ostendimus, qui cum *episcopatus* successionem charisma veritatis certum secundum placitum Patris acciperunt.—IRENÆUS, *Adv. Hær.*, lib. iv. c. 26, § 2. Comp. §§ 3, 4, 5; lib. iii. c. 2, § 2; c. 3, §§ 1, 2.

one and the same office. They, if any, have the true apostolical succession by descent from Rome itself.

Clement of Alexandria, who died some twenty years later than Irenæus, recognises presbyters as invested with the *superior* office of the ministry; and deacons, with the *inferior*. Bishop, presbyter, are with him identical.<sup>3</sup>

Jerome, who died A. D. 426, concurs with the foregoing. "In ancient authors, bishops and presbyters are the same; one title being descriptive of dignity of office, the other of age." "Bishop and presbyter are the same."\*

Augustine, A. D. 354, 430: "The office of a bishop is above that of a presbyter [not by Divine authority, but] according to the honorary names which obtain by the usage of the church."† Then follows a modest acknowledgment of the superiority of Jerome.

Pseudo-Augustin, A. D. 384: "That by a *presbyter* is meant a bishop, the apostle Paul teaches when he instructs Timothy, whom he had ordained a *presbyter*, what should be the character of him whom he would create a *bishop*." "What is a bishop but the first presbyter, that is to say, the highest priest?"‡ "The first presbyters were called bishops."§

Chrysostom, † A. D. 407, says that the elders or presbyters were formerly called *bishops* and servants of Christ, and that the bishops were called *elders*.||

Theodoret, † A. D. 458, styles both the elders and the bishops *watchmen*; alleging that, at that time, they were called by both names, ἀμφότερα γὰρ εἶχον κατ' ἐκεῖνον τὸν καιρὸν τὰ ὀνόματα.

\* Apud veteres iidem episcopi et presbyteri, quia illud nomen dignitatis est, hoc ætatis.—HIERONYMUS, *Epist.* 82, (al. 83,) *ad Oceanum*. Idem est ergo presbyter, qui episcopus.—*Epist.* 101, *ad Evangelum*. See under § 32, n. 2.—*Idem ad Tit.* i. 6.

† Secundum honorum vocabula quæ jam ecclesiæ usus obtinuit, episcopatus presbyterio major sit.—*Epist. ad Hieron.* 19, al. 83.

‡ Presbyterum autem intelligi episcopum probat Paulus apostolus, quando Timotheum, quem ordinavit presbyterum, instruit, qualem debeat creare episcopum, (1 Tim. iii. 1.) Quid est enim episcopus, nisi primus presbyter, hoc est summus sacerdos?—PSEUDO-AUGUSTINI, (according to the conjecture of the Benedictines, HILARII DIACONI,) *Quæstiones Vet. et Nov. Testamenti* (in the Appendix, tom. iii. p. ii. of the Benedict. ed.) *Quæst.* 101.

§ Primi presbyteri episcopi appellabantur.—*Idem ad Eph.* iv. 11.

|| Οἱ πρεσβύτεροι τὸ παλαιὸν ἐκαλοῦντο ἐπίσκοποι καὶ διάκονοι τοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ οἱ ἐπίσκοποι (ἐκαλοῦντο) πρεσβύτεροι.—*Hom.* i. in *Phil.* i. Comp. *Hom.* ix. in *Tim.* iii. 1.



In another passage, he also says, that those who were called *bishops* evidently held the rank of *presbyters*, *elders*.\*

It is remarkable how long this notion of the original sameness of bishops and presbyters was retained. Isidorus Hispalensis, A. D. 595, Etymol. 7, c. 12, copies the first quotation given above from Jerome.<sup>4</sup>

Eutychius, patriarch of Alexandria, about 930: "The evangelist Mark appointed twelve presbyters to remain with the patriarch; so that, when that office should become vacant, they might choose one of the twelve *presbyters*, upon whom the eleven should lay their hands and bless him, and create him a patriarch. Nor did this institution cease, down even to the time of Alexander, patriarch of Alexandria. He decreed that, upon the death of the patriarch, the *bishops* should assemble and appoint a patriarch."<sup>†</sup>

Bernaldus Constantiensis, about 1088, the most zealous defender of Gregory VII., after citing Jerome in his *De Presbyterorum Officio* Tract., continues: "Inasmuch, therefore, as *bishops* and *presbyters* were anciently the same, they had, without doubt, the same power to loose and to bind, and other things which are now the prerogatives of the bishop."<sup>‡</sup>

Even Pope Urban II., 1091, says: "We regard deacons and presbyters as belonging to the sacred order. If, indeed, these are the only orders which the primitive church is understood to have had, for these we have apostolic authority."<sup>§</sup>

Gratian, A. D. 1151, adopts, without hesitation, all the passages quoted above from Jerome.|| With whom, also, Isidorus Hispalensis, of an earlier age, agrees; and to whom the false decrees are ascribed.

\* Ὡς εἶναι δῆλον ὅτι ὑπὸ τοῦτον ἐτέλουν οἱ ἐν τῷ προοιμίῳ κληθέντες ἐπίσκοποι, τοῦ πρεσβυτέρου δηλονότι τὴν τάξιν πληροῦντες.—In *Phil.* ii. 25. Comp. in 1 *Tim.* iii. 1

† Constituit Marcus Evangelista xii. presbyteros, qui nempe manerent cum patriarcha, adeo ut cum vacaret patriarchatus eligerent unum e xii. presbyteris, cujus capiti reliqui xi. manus imponerent, eique benedicerent, et patriarcham eum crearent.—EUTYCHIUS, (Said Ibn Batrik, about 930.) Patriarcha Alex. in *Ecclesiæ suæ Orig.* (ed. *Joh. Selden*, p. xxix.) Comp. 1 *Tim.*

‡ Quum igitur presbyteri et episcopi antiquitus idem fuisse legantur, etiam eandem ligandi atque solvendi potestatem et alia nunc episcopis specialia habuisse non dubitantur.—*Monumentorum res Allemannorum illustrant.* S. Blas., 1792, 4to, t. ii. p. 384 et seq.

§ Sacros autem ordines dicimus diaconatum et presbyteratum. Hos siquidem solos primitiva legitur ecclesia habuisse: super his solum præceptum habemus apostoli.—POPE URBAN II., in *Conc. Benevent.* ann. 1091, can. 1.

|| Hieron. ad Tit. i. (Dist. xcv. c. 5,) *Epist. ad Evangel.* (Dist. xciii. c. 21.)

Nicholas Tudeschus, archbishop of Panorma, about A. D. 1428, says: "Formerly, *presbyters* governed the church in common, and ordained the clergy, *sacerdotes*."\*

It is, perhaps, still more remarkable that even the papal canonist, Jo. Paul Launcelot, A. D. 1570, introduces the passage of Jerome without any attempt to refute it.

Gieseler well remarks, "that the distinction between the divine and the ecclesiastical appointment, *institutio*, was of less importance in the middle ages than in the modern Catholic church; and this view of the original identity of bishops and presbyters was of no practical importance. It was not till after the Reformation that it was attacked. Michael de Medina, about A. D. 1570, does not hesitate to assert that those fathers were essentially heretics, but adds, that, out of respect for these fathers, this heresy in them is not to be condemned. Bellarmin, A. D. 1602, declares this is a 'very inconsiderate sentiment.' Since this, all Catholics, as well as many English Episcopalians, have maintained an original difference between bishop and presbyter."

4. *Official duties of presbyters.* These duties are comprised under the following heads:

1. Before any formal distinction was known between bishops and presbyters, the latter, especially those who were styled *προεστῶτες*, performed the duties of the former. Subsequent to the specific division of church officers, after the establishment of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, they performed a vicarious service in the place of the bishops; but there are occasional instances still later, when, in special cases, or by virtue of their office, they performed duties which, according to canonical rules, belonged exclusively to the bishops.

2. According to the views of the bishop's office which represent him as controlling all that relates to religious worship and the administration of the ordinances, the presbyters performed the common religious services as his representatives or assistants. As such, from the beginning, they discharged the offices of *teacher* and *preacher*, which appropriately belonged to the bishop. Even deacons were frequently authorized to preach. Hence, it appears that both presbyters and deacons acted in this capacity by authority delegated by the bishop. This state of things must, however,

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\* Olim presbyteri in communi regebant ecclesiam et ordinabant sacerdotes.—Ed. Lugdun., 1547, fol. 112 b."

be understood to have prevailed only in communities where both bishops and presbyters were present, and while the bishops were still able and disposed, themselves, to perform the duties of the ministry. Jerome expresses his dissatisfaction that presbyters were not fully invested with the office of the ministry.<sup>5</sup> The example of Leo and Gregory the Great, together with the fact that the sermons still extant are from bishops, Origen and others excepted, is sufficient to show that they continued to discharge the duties of public preachers through the first seven centuries of the Christian era. From the close of that period, these duties devolved entirely upon the presbyters.

3. The presbyters assisted in the administration of the sacraments. They are styled the *συλλειτουργοί*, *comministri*, *consecradores*, of the bishop who, according to the explicit rules of the church, had the control of this service. That the presbyters acted as the representatives and assistants of the bishops in this ordinance, may be inferred from the circumstance that in the rites of ordination, which belonged exclusively to the bishop, they also assisted in the imposition of hands.<sup>6</sup> Subsequently, they regularly administered the ordinances and other sacred rites, such as the following:

(a) They administered baptisms, particularly after the general introduction of infant baptism. The act of confirmation belonged to the bishop, though there are exceptions to this rule.

(b) They administered the sacrament of the Lord's supper. The solemnizing act in this ordinance is the consecration of the elements, which was performed by the presbyters, except when the bishop was *present*, or was *in missa pontificalibus*, as the phraseology was. Their duty was also, by an ancient rule, to impart the consecrated bread—the host, and to pronounce the benediction. The administration of this ordinance was one of the highest official acts of the presbyter.<sup>7</sup> With reference to this part of his office, he was styled *μεσίτης*, mediator, *medius*. A phraseology deservedly censured by Augustine as seeming to relate to the office of the Mediator of the Christian covenant; but it was, probably, intended to denote the intermediate grade of the *presbyter*, between the subordinate officers of the priesthood and the bishop.

(c) The presbyters also took part in acts of public penance, while that system prevailed; though it was under the general supervision of the bishop. All that related to the regulation of penance was, with certain reservations, under their immediate oversight.

They were the appropriate penitentiary priests, *penitentiarii* and *confessarii*.

(d) It belonged to them appropriately to solemnize marriages and to perform all the nuptial ceremonies.

(e) They administered extreme unction, after the introduction of this superstition, and performed all religious funeral services.

(f) All the forms of benediction and consecration pertained to their office, with the exception of certain reserved rites which, from the beginning, were exclusively prescribed to the bishops.

(g) The stated public prayers, *προσφωνήσεις, εὐχὰ τῶν πιστῶν*, and collects, *ἐπίκλησεις, occasional prayers*, were offered by the bishops and presbyters indiscriminately;<sup>8</sup> and both had a general superintendence of all their ceremonies of religious worship, together with the oversight of the deacons and lower officers of the priesthood.

4. In common with the bishops, presbyters indisputably had a part in the discipline of the church, both as it related to the clergy and the laity.<sup>9</sup> This point has been the subject of much uncertainty and controversy; but it was never denied that the right of concurrence belonged to the presbytery *collectively*, if not to individual members of it. Subsequently, it became the right of the chapters of the cathedral churches.

5. Presbyters, as well as bishops, were admitted to deliberate and to vote in the councils of the church, as the references subjoined sufficiently show.<sup>10</sup>

6. The most important office of the presbyters remains to be mentioned, and that is the "cure of souls," specific and general, *cura animarum, et generalis, et specialis*. This has ever been their chief employment as pastors, vicars, and parish ministers. This point cannot, in this place, be discussed at length; suffice it to say that, in the discharge of their duties, they had occasion to combat with the greatest difficulties. At one time, through the arrogance and tyrannical power of the bishops, at another, through the contempt of the monks, they became martyrs to their high and holy calling.

7. To presbyters belonged, originally, the right to ordain. This results, undeniably, from the original identity and equality of bishops and presbyters; a fact which is conceded by multitudes of churchmen, and which was universally admitted by the reformers of the church of England, until near the close of the sixteenth century. If to bishops belonged, *jure divino*, the right of ordina-

tion, by the same divine authority it belonged also to presbyters originally, for they were identically the same as bishops. After the rise of episcopacy, the right of ordination was claimed by the bishop, and denied, with great uniformity and pertinacity, to the presbyter. But such assumptions of human authority affect not the right originally conceded, *by divine authority*, upon presbyters in common with bishops. "There can be no apostolical succession for that which had no apostolical existence."

Notwithstanding all the jealousy with which bishops defended their right to ordain, against the invasion of it by presbyters, instances can be adduced in which this right was conceded to presbyters. The case of the presbyters in the church of Alexandria, and the authority of Jerome and Tertullian, and many of the English church, have been given in the Apostolical and Primitive Church, pp. 183-197.

Paphuntius, a presbyter of Egypt, ordained a monk of his order, who sustained the office of deacon, to that of presbyter, as related by Cassian, in the fifth century. The passage is cited below from Stillingfleet,\* who adds—"What more plain than that here a presbyter ordained a presbyter?" Bingham objects to this as "contrary to the rules and practice of the church." But the learned Boehmer remarks, in reply, "no proof can be brought from history that this ordination was disowned by the bishops of that country."

In the age of Leo the Great, certain of the clergy, *clerici*, were ordained by *false bishops*, *pseudo-episcopis*; but, on consultation, this bishop pronounced the ordination valid, provided it was done with the consent of the bishops.<sup>11</sup> Who were these *false* bishops but presbyters? The *chor-episcopi*, or country bishops, and who sustained much the same subordinate relations as presbyters, were uniformly esteemed as bishops, though often forbidden to ordain. They, therefore, who assumed the prerogative of the bishop in ordaining, may naturally be presumed to have been presbyters. Nothing in the context appears in conflict with this interpretation.

The validity of presbyterian ordination is even authorized indi-

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\* A. B. Paphuntius, solitudinis ejusdem presbytero. In tantum enim virtutibus ipsius adgaudebat, ut quem vitæ meritis sibi parem noverat, cœquare sibi etiam sacerdotii honore festinaret. Siquidem nequaquam ferens in inferiore eum ministerio diutius immorari, optansque sibimet successorem dignissimum providere, superstes eum presbyterii honore prorexit.—CASS. *Collat.* 4, c. i.



rectly by the Council of Amyra, A. D. 314.\* This canon decrees that the country bishops shall not be allowed either to ordain presbyters or deacons; and then adds, "neither shall the city presbyters [ordain] in another parish, *except by a written permission from the bishop.*" This exception distinctly recognises the right of a presbyter, on certain conditions, to ordain presbyters and deacons.

But, even if no authentic instance were on record of ordination by presbyters since the rise of episcopacy, we might still fall back to the time when bishops and presbyters were identically the same, and assert, with Neander, Planck, and many others, the right of presbyters to ordain.

A volume might be filled with episcopal authorities for the right of ordination as by them conceded to presbyters; and yet, in the face of such authorities, a certain reviewer has had the hardihood to affirm, that "never was this allowed before the Reformation, either in the church or by any sect however wild."

In reply to such vapouring, it is sufficient to refer to the authority of Archbishop Usher:—"I have declared my opinion to be that *episcopus* and *presbyter*, *gradu tantum differunt, non ordine*; and, consequently, that, in places where bishops cannot be had, the ordination by presbyters standeth valid."

The learned Stillingfleet as explicitly affirms that, "in the first primitive church, the presbyters all acted in common for the welfare of the church, and either did or might ordain others to the same authority with themselves." In proof, he refers to the instance of presbyterian ordination in the church of Alexandria, as detailed in the Apostolical and Primitive Church, pp. 183-186, and then adverts to the doctrine of the invalidity of ordination by presbyters; "which doctrine," he adds, "I dare with some confidence assert to be a stranger to our church of England, as shall be largely made appear afterwards."<sup>12</sup>†

\* Χώρεπισκόπους μὴ ἐξεῖναι πρεσβυτέρους ἢ διακόνους χειροτονεῖν ἀλλὰ μηδὲ πρεσβυτέρους πόλεως, χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπιτραπῆναι ὑπὸ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου μετὰ γραμμάτων ἐν ἐτέρᾳ παροικίᾳ.—BRUNS, *Canones*, p. 68.

† To these authorities may be added that of Davenant, the learned bishop of Salisbury:—"Si orthodoxi presbyteri, ne pereat ecclesia, alios presbyteros rogantur ordinare ego non ausim hujusmodi ordinationes pronuntiare irritas et inanes." In confirmation of this sentiment, Davenant adduces the authority of the schoolmen, Gulielmus Parisiensis, Gerson, Durand, &c.

Bishop Overal, to the same intent, cites the authority of the schoolmen, Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas, Richardus Armachanus, Testatus, Alphonsus a Castro, Petrus Canisius, Dominicus Soto, and Medina. The last two were distinguished

As late as the latter part of the fifth century, the vote of the people, at least in connection with that of the clergy, was essential to the due election of a presbyter. After this period, his appointment became the arbitrary act of the bishop, as his subaltern and servant. The necessary consequence of this dependence of the presbyter upon the bishop was to make the one a mere sycophant of the other.

The canonical age for entering on this office was, according to Bingham, *thirty-five*.

The usual times for the consecration of the presbyter to his office were the fasts of the fourth, seventh, and tenth months of the year, and the beginning and middle of Lent. These seasons, for this purpose, were not regarded in the earlier ages of the church.

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members of the Council of Trent. Medina, in confirmation of his own opinion, alleged the authority of Jerome, Ambrose, Augustin, Sedulius, Primasius, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Theophylact. These authorities are given by Dr. Bernard, the apologist of Usher. As a further attestation of the acknowledged validity of ordination by presbyters, Dr. Bernard refers to a case related by the archbishop of St. Andrews, in his History of Scotland, to this effect:—"When the Scotch bishops were to be consecrated by the bishops of London, Ely, and Bath, here at London House, A. D. 1609, he saith, a question was moved by Dr. Andrews, bishop of Ely, touching the consecration of the Scottish bishops who, as he said, must first be ordained *presbyters*, as having received no ordination from a bishop. The archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Bancroft, who was by, maintained that thereof there was no necessity; seeing, where bishops could not be had, the ordination given by presbyters must be esteemed lawful; otherwise, it might be doubted if there were any lawful vocation in most of the reformed churches. This applauded to by the other bishops, Ely acquiesced; and, at that day, and in the place appointed, the three Scottish bishops were consecrated by the aforesaid English bishops; the archbishop of Canterbury forbearing for another cause there mentioned."—*Judgment of the late Archbishop of Armagh*, London, 1657, pp. 135, 136.

The doctrine of the divine right of bishops and the exclusive validity of their ordination was promulgated in the English church by Dr. Bancroft, by a sermon preached January 12, 1588. This bold and novel assertion created a great sensation throughout the kingdom. "The greater part even of the prelatical party themselves were startled at the novelty of the doctrine; for none of the English reformers had ever regarded the bishops as any thing else than a human institution, appointed for the more orderly government of the church; and they were not prepared at once to condemn as heretical all churches where that institution did not exist. Whitgift himself, perceiving the use which might be made of such a tenet, said that the doctor's sermon had done much good—though, for his own part, he rather wished than believed it to be true."\* The doctrine was reaffirmed, half a century later, by Laud and his party;† and, from that time, has been the favourite dogma of many in the Episcopal church.

\* Hetherington's History of the Westminster Assembly, pp. 49, 50.

† Hallam's Constitutional History, vol. ii. pp. 440, 441.

The presbyter was consecrated to his office by the prayer of the bishop and the laying on of his hand, in connection with those of the presbytery.

The costume of the presbyter was a certain kind of robe, denominated *ovarium*, *planeta*, *casula*, *φελόνης*. No mention of this is made earlier than the fifth century. The anointing with oil was a later device.

5. *Of the different orders or classes of presbyters.* Like the bishops, the presbyters were very early divided into *city* and *rural presbyters*. The latter, *ἐπιχώριοι πρεσβύτεροι*, *regionarii*, were less esteemed, and accounted somewhat lower in rank, than the former. They were not permitted, for example, to administer the sacrament to a church in the city in the presence of the bishop, or city presbyter; but, in the absence of these, the duty devolved upon one of them.<sup>13</sup> Neither were they allowed to issue canonical epistles.\* Similar examples occur at all times sufficient to show that pastors in the country were subordinate to those in the city; and yet there is good evidence that all who sustained the office of the priesthood were accounted, *in theory*, equal.

2. The *ἀρχιπρεσβύτεροι* and *πρωτοπρεσβύτεροι*, *archpresbyters* and *pastores primarii*, were the same;<sup>14</sup> both are called by the same name.<sup>15</sup> One who sustains the relation of moderator and superior among the priesthood is called, by Jerome, *archpresbyter*, to distinguish him from the bishop.<sup>16</sup> By Gregory Nazianzen and others, the *oldest* clergyman was styled *archpresbyter*;<sup>17</sup> the Greeks called him *πρωτοπάπας*.<sup>18</sup>

As the members of the churches in the large cities increased and became too numerous to meet in one assembly, new places of worship were opened, where the presbyters ministered: and, again, as Christianity spread from a city into the country adjacent, new churches sprang up, which were supplied with presbyters under the bishop. These presbyters constituted a *presbytery*, *presbyterium*, *synedrium presbyterorum*. At a later period, this college of presbyters takes the name of *senatus*, or *concilium ecclesiæ*. This presbytery were the bishop's council, who acted and voted with him in the earlier stages of episcopacy.<sup>19</sup> Over this college of presbyters, it was a rule of the church that the oldest presbyter should

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\* Μὴ πρεσβυτέρους τοῖς ἐν ταῖς χώραις κανονικὰς ἐπιστολὰς διδόναι, ἢ πρὸς μόνους τοὺς γείτονας ἐπισκόπους ἐκπέμπειν.—*Conc. Antioch.* c. 8.

preside as *archpresbyter*. Another part of his duties is indicated in the note below.\*

The archpresbyters enjoyed the highest consideration between the fifth and eighth centuries, and occupied bishoprics as suffragans and vicar-generals. When the bishop's see became vacant, they discharged his duties and usually succeeded him in his office. Several branches of administration they held under their entire control, and not unfrequently engaged in a spirited controversy with the bishops themselves.<sup>20</sup> The bishops, on the other hand, sought by every means to oppose them, and accordingly favoured the *archdeacons* as a check upon the archpresbyters. The first notice of this policy appears in the Fourth Council of Carthage. These presbyters were finally made subject to the archdeacon by Innocent III., in the twelfth century.

3. The office of dean was first known in England, about the eleventh or twelfth century. The word is derived from *decanus*, *δεκαδάρχος*, and denotes the ruler of a *decad*, a body of ten men. The deans of cathedral churches were dignitaries of importance. Rural deans were inferior officers, who finally became merely itinerant visitors, and were, at all times, subject to the authority of the archdeacon.

4. *Cardinal presbyters*. These officials appeared about the beginning of the seventh century. They have often been confounded with archpresbyters, but were in reality distinct from them. Their title denotes permanency in office rather than seniority in age.<sup>21</sup> They appeared first as a creation of Gregory the Great.

5. The word *presbytera*, *presbyterissa*, *πρεσβυτέρα*, *πρεσβυρίς*, is of frequent occurrence in ancient writers; and may denote either the wife of a presbyter, a female officer, or a deaconess in the church; sometimes it denotes the matron of a cloister, and an abbess.

## § 7. RULING ELDERS.

THE presbyters of the apostolical churches might, with propriety, all be denominated ruling elders; the duty of labouring in word and doctrine being shared by them in common with others. Many have even affirmed that to teach was originally no part of the pres-

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\* Ut episcopus gubernationem viduarum et pupillorum et peregrinorum nor per se ipsum, sed per archipresbyterum aut per archidiaconum agat.—*Stat. Eccles. Antiq.* c. 17.

byter's office. But the apostles plainly teach that this was one of their most important and appropriate duties. They are appointed overseers to "feed the church of God." (Acts xx. 28.) The bishop or elder is required to be "apt to teach;" and they that are such are to be "accounted worthy of double honour." (1 Tim. iii. 2; 2 Tim. ii. 24; 1 Tim. v. 17.) It appears that some gave themselves especially to the work of the ministry; while others took upon themselves the oversight and superintendence of the church, according to their several qualifications and gifts, both common and miraculous. The passage last cited clearly indicates a distinct class of men as *ruling elders*. Was then the office of ruling elder a temporary and extraordinary provision for the edification of the church, like the miraculous gifts of prophecy, interpretation, &c., which soon ceased; or was it designed to be an ordinary and perpetual office in the church of Christ?

Presbyterians, in support of the latter position, appeal to such passages in history as the following. In their assemblies, where Christians met to read the Scriptures for their mutual edification, and to administer the divine censure, Tertullian informs us that certain *approved elders* presided, *præsident probati quique seniores*.<sup>1</sup> Origen speaks both of *principes populi* and *elders of the people*, *presbyteri plebis*, whose duty it is at all times to judge the people, to put an end to their quarrels and to reconcile the discordant."<sup>2</sup> In these "approved elders" and these "elders of the people" is recognised a continuation of the office of ruling elders. Cyprian speaks expressly of *teaching elders*, *presbyteri docentes*, which implies also the existence of another class, who did not teach, that is—*ruling elders*.<sup>3</sup> Why speak of teaching elders, if all teach? Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, A. D. 261, called together, at Arsinoe, the *elders* and *teachers* of the brethren in the villages, to discuss a novel doctrine respecting the millennium.<sup>4</sup> Augustin, on one occasion, addressed his beloved brethren, *the clergy, the elders, seniores*, and the whole church; and, in other places, speaks of these *seniores*.<sup>5</sup> In one instance, he speaks of them in distinction from bishops, presbyters, and deacons.\* Purpurius, in Africa, directs, on one occasion, his fellow-clergy, *concleros*, and *the elders of the people, ecclesiastical men, seniores plebis, ecclesiasticos vivos*, to make diligent inquiry into certain dissensions; and again addresses the clergy and *elders, seniores*, of Cirta.<sup>6</sup>

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\* Vos Episcopi, Presbuteri, Diaconi, et Seniores.—*Contr. Crescon.* iii. 29.



These passages, distinguishing a certain class of *elders*, by a distinct appellation, *seniores*, from the clergy, and even from the presbyters, *presbuteri*, are considered as indicating a class of ruling elders corresponding to those of the apostolic churches. And it is noticed also that these elders are particularly called upon to give attention to the discipline of the church, to adjudicate and settle dissensions among the brethren.

In reply to this course of reasoning, it is urged that these *seniores plebis* are limited, almost exclusively, to the churches in Africa; that they are a class peculiar to those churches; that they are carefully distinguished from the clergy, and are only aged laymen intrusted with certain duties there of a local and temporary character, and not a permanent or distinct class of ecclesiastical officers.

With this brief view of the historical argument for the office of ruling elders in the church, and the opposite conclusions derived from these authorities, the reader may well be left to his own decisions on the subject. By what means to submit the government and discipline of the church to the direction and control of its members is not so much a question of authority as of expediency; respecting which a great difference of opinion may be expected ever to prevail among those who would most carefully conform to the institutions and offices of the apostolical churches.

### § 8. OF DEACONS.

THE terms *διάκονος*, *διακονία*, *διακονεῖν*, are primarily employed with reference to every kind of service and every species of assistance, whether relating to religion or not; but they generally denoted some *specific* office. They correspond with the Hebrew *שָׂרָף* and *מְשָׂרָף*; though the Septuagint does not so interpret them, except in two instances. In the New Testament, the words are of frequent occurrence, both in a general and specific application.

But they are generally used in a *specific* sense to denote some kind of service in religious things, as in the following passages: *διακονία τοῦ λόγου*, Acts vi. 4; *διακονία τοῦ πνεύματος*, 2 Cor. iii. 8; *διακονία τῆς λειτουργίας*, 2 Cor. ix. 12; *κλῆρος τῆς διακονίας*, Acts i. 17, 25, xx. 25, xxi. 19; Rom. xi. 13; *διάκονοι καινῆς διαθήκης*, 2 Cor. iii. 6; *διάκονοι Θεοῦ*, 2 Cor. vi. 4. Compare also 1 Pet. iv. 10, i. 12; 2 Tim. i. 18; Acts xix. 22.

It is particularly important, however, to remark, that the word

*διακονία* has, in many passages, reference to an office in the church instituted by the apostles; and that the appellation of *διάκονος*, *deacon*, denotes one whose duty it is *to receive the charities of the church and to distribute their alms*: Acts ix. 29, 30, xii. 25; Rom. xvi. 1, 31, xv. 25; 2 Cor. viii. 4, ix. 1, 13, 19, 20; Heb. vi. 10; 1 Tim. viii. 8, 10, 12, 13; Phil. i. 1; 1 Peter iv. 10, 11. An explicit account of the first appointment of deacons in the church at Jerusalem is given in Acts vi. 1-7. Here it may be observed, 1. That the appointment was made to obviate a misunderstanding between the Jewish and Gentile converts respecting the distribution of the daily alms of the church. 2. This account presupposes that there were already almoners of the poor; but that they belonged exclusively to the *Jewish* converts. Mosheim<sup>1</sup> and Kuinoel<sup>2</sup> have well observed, that the office of deacon was derived from the Jewish synagogue; in which there were three persons intrusted with the care of the poor, who were called פְּרָנָסִים, *pastores*. But, in the church at Jerusalem, seven of the Gentile converts were appointed as deacons, that they might better equalize the distribution between the two parties. 3. These seven were Hellenists, Grecians, as both their names and their care of the widows of such sufficiently indicate. 4. They were inducted into office by prayer and the imposition of hands; and yet, though full of faith and the Holy Ghost, they took no part, officially, in the ministration of the word. 5. They were not reckoned with the priesthood. By virtue of their ordination, they became officers of the church, and bore a part in the service of the church, *διακονία τῆς λειτουργίας*, while they had no concern with the instruction or discipline of the church.

“Can it be imagined,” says Bishop White, “that an order, instituted for the purpose of serving tables, should, in the very infancy of its existence, have the office of the higher order committed to it? I do not deny either the right or the prudence of allowing what has been subsequently allowed to this lowest order of the clergy. All I contend for is, that, in the first institution of the order, there could have been no difference between them and laymen, in regard to the preaching of the word and the administering of sacraments.”\*

“The deacons, as we have already remarked, were primarily appointed for a secular object; but, in the discharge of their special duty, frequently came in contact with home and foreign Jews; and since men had been chosen for this office who were full of Christian

zeal, full of Christian faith, and full of Christian wisdom and prudence, they possessed both the inward call and the ability to make use of these numerous opportunities for the spread of the gospel among the Jews. In these attempts, Stephen especially distinguished himself." Philip also performed a similar service: though it was no part of his original office to preach, it was his privilege, in common with other Christians; and he had the honour to gather, in Samaria, the first Christian church out of Jerusalem. Such are the views of Neander, who, like Bishop White, supposes that these men preached and taught, not by virtue of their office as deacons, but of their privilege as Christians.<sup>3</sup>

These officers continued, for a long time, to perform only the duties at first ascribed to them; nor does it appear that they were appointed in other churches, save that at Jerusalem. It is, at least, remarkable, that no trace of them in other churches is perceptible in the Acts of the Apostles, not even when the apostles are making arrangements for the due administration of the church in their absence, (chap. xiv. 23, comp. Tit. i. 5,) nor in the Epistles to the Romans, Ephesians, Colossians, and Thessalonians. In Philippians i. 1, mention is merely made of them in connection with bishops; but no intimation is given respecting their office.

On the other hand, in 1 Tim. iii. 8–13, instructions are given for the appointment of deacons in the church at Ephesus, whose offices are totally unlike those of the seven whose appointment is recorded in the sixth chapter of Acts. 1. They are introduced in immediate connection with bishops, of whom Luke makes no mention. 2. In Jerusalem, they were *chosen* by the church and installed into their office. Here nothing is said of their election. 3. If bishops and presbyters are classed together as one in office, then these deacons obviously constitute a *distinct* class; but if the deacons and presbyters are identical, then it would follow that there is no mention of deacons in the New Testament as constituting a *third order*. The ancients adopted the first supposition, and, accordingly, always unite the terms bishops and deacons. 4. Many have denied that the deacons were entitled in any case to preach.<sup>4</sup> In reply to which, no further proof is requisite than the words of the apostle—"They that have used the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness *in the faith which is in Christ Jesus*," 1 Tim. iii. 9, 13)—and the example of Stephen and of Philip. It may still be a question whether Philip preached by virtue of his office *as deacon*, or whether he, and others who

were competent to this duty, preached as they had occasion, though not by virtue of their office as deacons in the church.

The opinion of Neander is, that the office of deacon comprised, even in the apostolical churches, other duties than that one for which they were specifically appointed; of which the publication of the gospel may have been one. On the other hand, even under the hierarchy, when they acted as ministers of the church in the place of the bishop, "the fundamental principle, as well as the name of the office, remained." We find traces of the distribution of alms being considered as the peculiar employment of deacons.\*

The most ancient authorities afford the fullest evidence that they were strictly ministers who acted as the assistants of bishops and presbyters in their religious services and other official duties. To use a military phrase, they were the *adjutants* of the bishop. Such is the uniform testimony of ancient history.<sup>6</sup> "Let the deacon," says the book of Apostolical Constitutions, "refer all things to the bishop, as Christ did to the Father." "Such things as he is able, let him rectify, by the power which he has from the bishop, just as the Lord is delegated by the Father to act and to decide; but let the bishop judge the more important cases."<sup>7</sup>† Again:—"Let the deacon be the ear, the eye, the mouth, the heart, the soul of the bishop." They are also styled his angels and his prophets. So universally did the bishop employ their service in the discharge of his duties.

In consequence of these relations to the bishop, they early assumed to themselves great consequence, and refused to render similar assistance to presbyters, so that it often became necessary, in ecclesiastical councils, to admonish them of their duties by such decrees as the following:—"Let the deacons observe their proper place, knowing that they are, indeed, the assistants of the bishop, but that they are inferior to the presbyters."<sup>8</sup> "Let the deacon know that he is alike the minister of the presbyter and of the bishop."<sup>9</sup> The same council proceeds to admonish him of his subordination, reminding him that he was ordained to his office by the bishop *alone*, without the aid of presbyters; for which they offer the following reason:—*Quia non ad sacerdotium sed ad ministe-*

\* Οἱ διάκονοι διακονοῦντες τὰ τῆς ἐκκλησίας χρήματα.—ORIGEN, *In Math.* i. § 22.

† This reference to the relations of Christ to the Father was very common in the second and third centuries. From the fourth century it was avoided, to prevent giving countenance to the Arian theory of his actual subordination.



*rium* consecratur. Because he is appointed, not to the *sacerdotal*, but the *ministerial* office: he was consecrated, not as a *priest*, but as a *minister*.

The deacons continued to acquire increasing consideration as the bishops rose in power. From the second to the fifth century especially, the deacons had great influence in the church. They had now become so great that decrees in council of the churches were passed to restrict their power. Bishops began to compare their office with that of the Jewish priesthood, which sunk the deacons to the condition of the Levites.<sup>10</sup> Those, however, who were called archdeacons gained great favour with the bishop, by reason of the assistance they rendered to him in curtailing the power of the presbyters.<sup>11</sup> The *seven* who were originally appointed at Jerusalem, became a precedent for limiting their number in other churches, beyond which they were never much increased. So that they derived increasing consequence from the fact that they were so few. In the churches of Alexandria and Constantinople, however, this canonical number was greatly exceeded.<sup>12</sup> In the latter, there were, in the sixth century, one hundred deacons; but the Western church adhered to the original number—seven. Cornelius, bishop of Rome, in the third century, had only this number; though he had, at the same time, forty presbyters.<sup>13</sup> Such was also the case in the fifth century.<sup>14</sup>

There was another class of persons whose duty it was to perform the *lower offices* of deacons, and who, for this reason, were called *sub-deacons* and assistants, ὑποδιάκονοι, ὑπηρεταί. These were created a *distinct class*, when the duties of the deacons became too arduous for them, in order that they might not diminish, by the increase of their own number, the consideration which they had acquired. Even these sub-deacons are, in many churches, included in the superior order of their officers.

Deacons are sometimes called Levites, and their office *levitica dignitas*, *leviticum ministerium*. In the councils of the Western church, presbyters and deacons are indiscriminately called by that name.<sup>15</sup>

From the above statements, it appears that the duty of the deacons was to perform the services which the bishops and presbyters were either unwilling or unable to discharge, with the exception of those which, according to the rules and usages of the church, could not be delegated to another. There were official duties of his own which the bishop could not impose even upon presbyters. These



it was equally unlawful for him to delegate to the deacons. Exceptions were occasionally made, especially in the case of the arch-deacon, but they were violations of established usage.

The consecration of the eucharist was one of the reserved rights which could not be delegated to the deacons.<sup>16</sup> Instances to the contrary occasionally occurred, but they were violations of an established rule. Baptism, extreme unction, etc., they were allowed to administer, as not belonging to the most sacred offices of the priesthood. From their performing only these subordinate ministerial duties, they were early called *sacerdotes secundi vel tertii ordinis*, priests of the second or third order.

But there must have been certain duties belonging to their office besides those which were delegated to them, else they could not with propriety be regarded as a *third* order of officers in the church. Of those offices, *two* are generally specified—*that of reading the Gospels, and of assisting the bishop and presbyter in the sacrament of the Lord's supper*.<sup>17</sup> The deacons alone were permitted to read the Gospel in the communion service. For this reason, the presentation of the Gospel to them was one of the rites of their ordination.

The above were the *distinguishing characteristics* of their office. A fuller enumeration of their duties, after the establishment of the hierarchy, is given below.

1. Their first duty was to assist in the administration of the sacrament. "After the benediction of the minister, and the response of the people," says Justin Martyr, "they, whom we call deacons, distribute the consecrated bread, and wine, and water to each one that is present, and carry them to those who are absent."<sup>18</sup> According to the constitutions, the *bishop* distributed the bread, and the deacons presented the cup after the blessing of it by the bishop.<sup>19</sup> In the absence of the bishop, the presbyter invariably performed the service of consecrating the cup.

Connected with the sacramental service, certain other duties devolved upon the deacons. (a) They publicly proclaimed the name of each communicant.<sup>20</sup> (b) They received the contributions of the communicants and delivered them to a subordinate officer for safe keeping. (c) They had the charge of the sacred utensils—the chalice, the patin or plate, the napkin, the fan for repelling the flies, *πίπιδιον*, *flabellum*, etc.<sup>21</sup>

2. It was their duty, previous to the appointment of readers, to perform the services of that office in the reading of the Scriptures.

Subsequently it continued to be their duty still to read the Gospels in the celebration of the eucharist whenever the bishop did not officiate in person, in which case the reading devolved upon the presbyter.<sup>22</sup> At Alexandria, the archdeacon alone read the Scriptures—in other churches, the deacons, and in many also the presbyters performed this service, and on feast-days it was discharged by the bishop himself.<sup>23</sup>

3. They acted as monitors in directing the several parts of religious worship, giving notice by set forms, called *προσφωνήσεις*, of the commencement of each act of worship, and calling the attention of the audience to it, commanding silence and preserving order. For this reason they were called the sacred heralds of the church, *ἱεροκήρυκες, κήρυκες, tibicines sacri, precones*, etc. The following are examples of these forms: *δεηθῶμεν, oremus*, let us pray; *orate catechumeni*, let the catechumens pray; *attendamus*, attention; *flectamus genua*, kneel; *ἀπολύεσθε*, you are dismissed; *προέλθετε, ite*, withdraw; *missa est*, the service is ended; *sursum corda*, lift up your hearts; *sancta sanctis*, holiness becomes sacred things; and the like.<sup>24</sup>

4. They had a general oversight of the assembly in religious worship, to prevent disturbance, and see that every thing was conducted with propriety.

5. They *occasionally* preached in the absence of the bishop. Chrysostom, when deacon of the church at Antioch, preached for his Bishop Flavianus, as did also Ephraim the Syrian, under similar circumstances. The right is firmly denied by Ambrose,<sup>25</sup> but explicitly authorized by the Second Council of Vaison, A. D. 529, c. 2, which devolves upon them the duty of conducting the worship in the absence of the bishops and presbyters, or when they were prevented by infirmity from officiating.

6. The duty of giving catechetical instructions stood on the same footing. It was the appropriate duty of the bishop; but the deacons were frequently intrusted with the service to the candidates for baptism, especially when it was continued for a length of time.

7. They administered baptism by permission of the bishops and presbyters as *their substitutes*, but not as authorized administrators of the ordinance.<sup>26</sup>

8. They were not only permitted, but in certain cases required, to absolve and restore penitent backsliders. St. Cyprian says, "If they, the sick, are seized by any dangerous disease, they need not await my return, but may have recourse to any presbyter that is

present, or if a presbyter cannot be found, and their case becomes alarming, they may make their confession before a deacon, that so they may receive imposition of hands and go to the Lord in peace."—Ep. 13, al. 18.

9. They had the charge of the inferior orders of church officers and servants, and, in the absence of the presbyters might, at their discretion, censure or suspend them for a time for misconduct.

10. They acted as the representatives and proxies of their bishops in general council. In such cases they sat and voted, in the Eastern church, not as *deacons*, but as *proxies*, in the room and place of those that sent them. In the Western church they voted after the bishops, and not in the place of those whose proxies they were.

11. They exercised an inspection over the life and morals both of the clergy and laity. They were the *justices* and *grand jury-men* of the church, and were to make diligent inquiry and due presentation to their bishops. It is in this sense that they are styled *the eyes* and *the ears* of the bishop.<sup>27</sup> Their office evidently must have been one of great respectability; but at the same time such duties must have rendered it odious to the community.

12. It was their duty to receive and disburse the charities of the church. In the discharge of these duties they were styled the *mouth* and the *heart* or *soul* of the bishop. In this sense they were accounted the indispensable assistants of the bishop, without whom he could do nothing.<sup>28</sup> Their duties increased with the possessions of the church, so that they acted essentially as the accountants and clerks of the bishop.

It appears from the foregoing specifications, that the original duties of the deacons, the care of the poor and of the sick, continued to adhere to them, and that from time to time other duties were added to these, which greatly modified the nature of their office, but never exempted them from the discharge of their specific duties. The Apostolical Constitutions make it the duty of the deacon to visit, to minister to the infirm, to the weak,—to travel about to minister, to serve and to report to the bishop all that are in affliction.<sup>29</sup> As the riches of the church increased, it is true, indeed, that the bishops contrived to hold the principal control of the funds of the church, but they cheerfully submitted to the deacons such duties as involved the inconvenience of providing for such as were objects of the charity of the church.

The canonical age for entering on the duties of the deacon's office was *twenty-five*, but this rule was not always observed.

The official vestments of the deacons, under the hierarchy, were a long white flowing robe, hanging particularly on the left side, and extending down to the feet, over which hung the orarium.

### § 9. OF DEACONESSSES.

THE office of deaconess may be regarded as substantially the same with that of *female presbyters*. They were early known in the church by a great variety of names, all of which, with some circumstantial variations, denoted the same class of persons. They were helpers, assistants to perform various services in the church. The following are the most frequent names by which they are distinguished, *πρεσβύτιδες*, *διακόνισσαι*, *episcopæ*, *episcopissæ*, *antistæ*, *χήραι*, *viduæ*, *viduatas*, *προκαθήμεναι*, *ministræ*, *ancillæ*, etc. Their most frequent appellation however is that of *deaconess*, *diaconissa*, a term which does not occur in the Scriptures, though reference is undoubtedly had to the *office* in Rom. xvi. 1. Profane writers use the term ἡ διάκονος, and *diacona*, to denote both the wife of a deacon, and an officer in the church; which has been a fruitful source of misunderstanding respecting the nature of this office.

The points of inquiry which have been raised on this subject are arranged under the following heads:—

1. The terms *διάκονοι*, *χήραι*, *πρεσβύτεραι*, in many passages distinctly indicate that they were appointed to perform the same offices towards the female sex, as the deacons discharged for their sex, Rom. xvi. 1, 2, 11; 1 Tim. v. 3, seq.; Titus ii. 3, seq.; 1 Tim. iii. 11. No satisfactory explanation has yet been given of the origin of this office: some suppose it to have been derived from the Jews; others, that it was peculiar to the Christian church; Paul's commendation of Phebe, Rom. xvi. 1, 2, however, refutes the hypothesis that they were appointed to administer *exclusively* to their own sex.

Hugo Grotius, in his commentary on that passage, says that "in Judea the deacons could administer freely to the female sex. The office of deaconess was accordingly unknown among the Jews; but in Greece no man was allowed to enter the apartment of that sex, which custom gave rise to *two* classes of female assistants, one called *πρεσβύτιδες*, or *προκαθήμεναι*, who devoted their attention to the *department* of the women; the other *διάκονοι*, Latin *diaconissæ*, whom Pliny in his epistle to Trajan calls *ministræ*, attended to the

poor and the sick of their own sex, and provided for their wants." Whatever may have been the origin of the office, it was evidently known in the age of the apostles, and continued unto the fourth century in many churches and various countries, if not in all of them.

One part of their office was *to give religious instruction*, which undoubtedly was merely *catechetical*; for the language of Paul, 1 Cor. xiv. 34; 1 Tim. ii. 8-12, forbids the supposition that they ever usurped the place of *public* teachers; but the primitive church at least agreed in permitting them to impart catechetical instruction to their own sex. They were in this way private catechists to female catechumens.

2. Satisfactory evidence of the reality of this office is derived, not only from the apostles and the ancient fathers, but from pagan writers, particularly from Pliny, who mentions them in his account of the persecutions of the Christians as *ancillæ quæ ministræ dicebantur*. They are also mentioned by Lucian of Samosata, under the name of widows. P. 38.

3. The requisite age for this office was usually sixty years and upward,<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. v. 9; but the usage of the church in this respect was not uniform. According to some councils they were eligible to this office at *forty*,<sup>2</sup> some were chosen even at the early age of *twenty*.<sup>3</sup> Their age probably varied with the particular duties to which they were appointed; matrons, venerable for age and piety, being selected for religious teachers, and younger women for almsgiving, the care of the sick, assistants at baptism, etc. Neither were *widows* alone invariably appointed to this office. Tertullian however directs that they should be the widow of one man, having children. But Ignatius, in his epistle to the Smyrneans, salutes the *virgins* that are called widows; and such were not unfrequently chosen to this office,<sup>4</sup> though it must be admitted that widows of virtuous character were sometimes denominated *παρθένοι, virgins*.<sup>5</sup>

4. The ordination of deaconesses has been the subject of much dispute; but there is satisfactory evidence that they were consecrated to their office by prayer and the imposition of hands.<sup>6</sup> This form of consecration was indeed prohibited by certain councils,<sup>7</sup> but even the prohibition of it is evidence that it was practised. Their consecration, however, gave them *no power to perform any of the duties of the sacred office*; they were merely a religious order in the church. The views of the primitive church respecting them are well expressed by Epiphanius, who intimates that one part of



their duty was to perform such offices for their sex, particularly in baptism, as the usages of the church required, and which could not with propriety be administered by the public ministers of the church.\* They were also particularly necessary in the East, where that sex is carefully excluded from intercourse with the other.

5. Their duties were, (a) *To take the care of the poor and the sick*: this in the apostolic age was their principal office—a service so commendable that, in imitation of it, even Julian the Apostate required the same. Under this head may also be classed the duty of ministering to martyrs, and confessors in prison.

(b) *To instruct catechumens, and to assist at their baptism*. They instructed female candidates in the symbols, and other things preparatory to their baptism. Their attendance at the baptism of candidates of their own sex was requisite to assist in divesting them of their raiment, to administer the unction, and to make arrangements for the administration of the ordinance with all the decency becoming a rite so sacred.†

(c) *To exercise a general oversight over the female members of the church*. This oversight they continued, not only in all the exercises of religious worship, of the sacrament, and of penance, but in private life, imparting needful admonition, and making due reports of them to the presbyters and bishop.<sup>8</sup>

6. This office ceased in the church at an early period, but the precise time cannot be determined. It was abrogated in France, by the Council of Orange, A. D. 441, and appears to have gradually ceased from the Western church. The Council of Laodicea, A. D. 360, c. 11, is supposed to have abrogated this office in the Eastern church. Such is Böhmer's interpretation of it, though he admits that the office continued in the church at Constantinople until the twelfth century.

Various considerations probably led to the abrogating of this

\* Καὶ ὅτι μὲν διακονισῶν τάγμα (ordo) ἐστὶν εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ εἰς ἱερατεῖαν, οὐδὲ τι ἐπιχωρεῖν ἐπιτρέπειν, ἔνεκεν δὲ σεμνότητος τοῦ γυναικείου γένους, ἥ δι' ὤραν λουτροῦ ἢ ἐπισκέψεως πάθους ἢ πόνου καὶ ὅτε γυμνωθεῖν σῶμα γυναικός, ἵνα μὴ ὑπὸ ἀνδρῶν ἱερουργούντων δεαδεῖται, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ τῆς διακονίσσης.—EPIPHAN. *Haer.* 79.

† The custom of the times was to baptize by immersion, and in a state of nudity. The duties of the deaconesses are duly set forth by the first Council of Carthage, A. D. 399. *Viduae vel sanctimoniales, quæ ad ministerium baptizandarum mulierum eliguntur, tam instructæ sint ad officium, ut possint apto et sano sermone docere imperitas et rusticas mulieres tempore, quo baptizandæ sunt, qualiter baptizatori respondeant, et qualiter accepto baptismate vivant.*

office, such as the following:—The services of these women became less important after the cessation of the *agapæ* of the primitive church; the care of the sick and the poor, which had devolved upon the church, was in the time of Constantine assumed by the state; after the general introduction of infant baptism in consequence of the prevalence of the Christian religion,\* their attendance at this ordinance became of less importance; and finally, they, in their turn, became troublesome aspirants after the prerogatives of office; just as the abbesses and prioresses of later times assumed all the offices of the bishop, preaching, administering the communion, absolving, excommunicating, and ordaining at pleasure; abuses which it required all the authority of councils, and of the pope himself, to rectify; in a word, the order was abolished because it was no longer necessary. *Cessante causa, cessat effectus.*

There were fanatical sects even in the ancient church, such as the Montanists and Collyridians, who authorized and encouraged women to speak, dispute, and teach in public. But the sentiment of the church has uniformly been opposed to such indecencies. What impudence, says Tertullian, in these heretical women to teach, to dispute, to exorcise, and even to baptize!<sup>9</sup> Let no woman speak in public, nor teach, nor baptize, nor administer the sacrament, nor arrogate to herself any office of the ministry belonging to the other sex.<sup>10</sup> Let not a woman, however learned or holy, presume to teach men in public assembly—is the injunction of the Council of Carthage, iv. 99. Let all the female sex, says Chrysostom, forbear from assuming the responsibility of the sacred office and the prerogatives of men.<sup>11</sup> The Apostolic Constitutions declare it to be a heathenish custom;<sup>12</sup> and Epiphanius has a particular dissertation in which he shows at large, that no woman, from the foundation of the world, was ever ordained to offer sacrifice or perform any solemn service of the church.

#### § 10. OF ARCHDEACONS.

THE policy of the bishop, in attaching to himself the interests of the deacons in opposition to the presbyters, was peculiarly manifested in respect to the archdeacon, who was the firm adherent of

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\* Baptisms were at first necessarily administered chiefly to *adults*, who were received into the church as converts from paganism. But this circumstance is no argument against the ordinance of infant baptism.

the bishop and the bitter opponent of the archpresbyters. The office, indeed, owed its chief importance, if not its origin, to the rivalry between bishops and presbyters for dignity and power, and was designed to counteract the influence, particularly of the *archpresbyters*.

Contrary to the general usage of antiquity, qualifications for office had more influence in his election than seniority of age and ordination. Athanasius of Alexandria, while yet a young man, was invested with the office of archdeacon.<sup>1</sup> Jerome also gives us to understand that the deacons chose from among themselves indiscriminately the most suitable candidate for the office, or, with greater probability, the archdeacon was first chosen by the deacons, as at Alexandria, in the fourth century, and at a later period was at the disposal of the bishop, as in France, in the fourth century. According to the same author, there was one archdeacon for each church. But while the office was in certain churches *elective*, in others it was filled by appointment of the bishop. Indeed, he might very naturally be expected to guard with peculiar jealousy the appointment of this officer who, according to the antiquated phraseology of the day, was to be his own right hand, his mouth, his ear, his eye. Accordingly, when the rule of seniority prevailed, the bishop retained the right of overruling it at pleasure, leaving to the candidate elect his rank and title, but substituting in his place another better qualified to transact the business of the office.<sup>2</sup>

The leading historical facts relating to this office, are briefly as follows:—

1. The office occurs as early as the fourth or fifth century, but without any distinct title; such were Athanasius of Alexandria, Cæcilian of Carthage, and the famous Leo the Great of Rome.

2. The arrogance and ambition of the archdeacons became, as early as the fifth century, the subject of bitter complaint.\* This arrogance, which first evinced itself by an assumption of authority

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\* *Audio quemdam in tantam erupisse vecordiam, ut diaconos presbyteris, id est episcopis anteferreret; nam quum apostolus perspicue doceat, eosdem esse presbyteros, quos episcopos, quid patitur mensarum et viduarum minister, ut supra eos se tumidus efferat, ad quorum preces Christi corpus sanguisque conficitur,—ceterum etiam in ecclesia Romæ presbyteri sedent, et stant diaconi; licet paulatim increbrescentibus vitiis, inter presbyteros, absente episcopo, sedere diaconum viderim, et in domesticis conviviis benedictiones presbyteris dare. Discant, qui hoc faciunt, non se recte facere. Sciant, quare diaconi constituti sint. Legant Acta Apostolorum, recordentur conditionis suæ. HIERON. Ep. 146, *Ad Evangel**

over the presbyters, finally became troublesome to the bishops themselves, by whom it was at first encouraged.

3. They often had the address to become the successors of the bishop; they claimed to take precedence of the presbyters, and to be second in rank only to the bishop.<sup>3</sup>

4. Their power became greatly extended through the period reaching from the seventh to the ninth centuries, when they were not only authorized to remove deacons and subordinate officers,<sup>4</sup> but the honours shared by them were in some instances eagerly sought by the presbyters themselves;<sup>5</sup> even the jurisdiction of the bishop was disowned by them, with whom they became, in a measure, partners in office.<sup>6</sup>

5. From the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries, the bishops were engaged in a fruitless endeavour to curtail the grasping ambition of the archdeacons, who still had the address to elude their efforts through the influence of synods, and by allying themselves more and more with the *secular power*. Finally, they not only became independent of the bishops, but subjected them, in a degree, to their own control.<sup>7</sup> The establishment and the increase of their power was favoured at Rome, as the means of weakening the hands of the bishops and extending the influence of the Romish see. So that the very order of men that the bishops employed to assist them in gaining ascendancy over the presbyters, was now employed by a more aspiring power against themselves.

6. In the thirteenth century, the archbishops succeeded in putting an effectual check upon the immoderate power of the archdeacons; a decree in council having been finally obtained which prohibited the archdeacon from employing *any substitute whatever* in the discharge of his office, or passing any *judicial* sentence for grave offences *without the permission of the bishop*. The archbishops also required of the bishops that they should employ, in the discharge of their duties, a new class of officers, who should be entirely distinct from the archdeacons. These were first appointed by Innocent IV., A. D. 1250, and were called *vicarii*, *officiales*, officials, vicars, and also vicar-generals, because they were intrusted with judicial authority and adjudicated in the name of the bishop. This measure had the desired effect to reduce the power of the archdeacon, which in consequence became an inconsiderable office. In the East it became extinct as early as the eighth century.

The office itself may be compared both with that of bishop and deacon, for it partook in part of the nature of both. The principal

complaint against the archdeacon arose from the abuse of his power in assuming as his right what was only delegated to him, as has been already related. His various offices are specified by Bingham in the following summary:—1, To attend the bishop at the altar; 2, to assist him in managing the church revenues; 3, in preaching; 4, in ordaining the inferior clergy; 5, he also had power to censure deacons, and the inferior clergy, but not presbyters.

### § 11. SUBDEACONS.

THIS office is a creation of the third century, which Cyprian<sup>1</sup> is the first to mention. In the Eastern church, Athanasius, who lived a century later, first notices it, at which time it had become common in the churches. Though frequently associated with the inferior clergy, their office may be considered in connection with that of deacons.

The specific duty of the subdeacons was to *assist the deacons in their duties*. The number of these was so limited that it was quite impracticable for them personally to discharge all the duties of their office. For this reason they were provided with the assistance of the subdeacons. Like the deacons, these were usually *seven* in number. To this number the church of Rome adhered with singular pertinacity. But in order that they might retain their sacred number *seven*, and still have the aid of a sufficient number of assistants, they created *three* several classes of these officers, consisting of seven each, and called *palatini*, *stationarii*, and *regionarii*.<sup>2</sup> In the church at Constantinople there were at one time ninety, and, at another, seventy subdeacons.

Authorities are not agreed respecting the consecration of the subdeacons. Some affirm that they were, and others that they were not, ordained by the imposition of hands.<sup>3</sup> In the East they were uniformly regarded as of a subordinate rank, and classed with the *readers*. In the West they ranked the first in the *lower order* of the priesthood, and about the twelfth or thirteenth centuries they were transferred to the *superior order*.<sup>4</sup> The reason for this promotion was that, on the elevation of the episcopate in the increasing power of the hierarchy, the *three* orders might still retain their original number and relative rank. The Eastern church adhered more closely to the original design for which they were appointed.

Before their promotion in the Western church, their duties were the following:—To convey the bishop's letters or messages to foreign



churches, and to execute other commissions of the superior ministers; to prepare the altar and the sacred vessels of the altar for public worship, and to deliver them to the deacon in time of divine service; to take charge of the clerical vestments; to attend the door of the church during the communion service, taking care that no one went in or out during the time of oblation; and, perhaps, to conduct those who came into the church to their proper places.<sup>5</sup> They stood in much the same relation to the deacons as these to the presbyters: as the deacons were appointed to relieve and assist the presbyters, so the subdeacons were the assistants of the deacons.

After their promotion in the Western church, they were permitted to assist in celebrating mass. An empty chalice and patine were delivered to them at their ordination; but they were not allowed either to consecrate or distribute the sacred elements. As it was customary to deliver to the deacons a copy of the Gospels, so to the subdeacons was delivered a copy of the Epistles also, at their ordination. In a word, the strife was to elevate their office as much as possible above that of the reader, and to attach to it all possible honours. Contrary to all the authority of the primitive church, they were often promoted to the highest honours and offices of the priesthood.

## CHAPTER IX.

### INFERIOR ORDERS OF THE CLERGY, SUBORDINATE SERVANTS, AND EXTRAORDINARY OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH.

UNDER this head we enter upon an enumeration of the various offices which were created chiefly in the third and subsequent centuries, and were totally unknown in the apostolic churches. Some may have become necessary as the churches increased, and new duties and responsibilities arose: many more were the result of the elevation of the episcopal office, and the careful distinction of orders and offices under the hierarchy: others became necessary as a part of the ceremonials of the liturgical service to which the simplicity of primitive worship gave place.

#### § 1. OF READERS.

THESE occupied the first rank in the lower order of church officers in the Greek church; in the Roman, they were next in rank to the subdeacons. They have been frequently regarded as an order instituted by the apostles, and by them derived from the Jewish synagogue. Compare Luke iv. 16; Acts xiii. 15, 27; 2 Cor. iii. 14. And it must be admitted that reading formed a very important part of public worship in the Christian church from the beginning. Timothy was directed to give attendance to *reading* as well as to exhortation and to doctrine. It was a custom of the synagogue, transferred to the church, to make the reading of the Scriptures a part of public worship. But the fact that the Scriptures were read by certain individuals is not proof that these constituted a distinct order. Justin, indeed, distinguishes between the *reader* and the presiding officer of the church, and yet the *former* may have been a presbyter or deacon. The deacons were expressly required to read at the communion service, but this is no certain evidence that they may not have been at the same time the ordinary readers in the religious service. For these reasons it is advisable to refer the institution of this order to the *third* century. They are first mentioned by Tertullian, who complains of the heretics that they con-

found all rule and order, allowing the same person to perform alternately the offices of bishop, presbyter, deacon, and *reader*.\* Cyprian also mentions the ordination of a *reader*, and remarks that the readers are a subordinate class who are candidates for promotion to the clerical office.<sup>1</sup>

The office was at first held in peculiar honour. Cyprian styles the reader the instructor of the audience, intimating thereby both the dignity of the office and the importance of the reading of the Scriptures as a part of divine worship. The church observed the rules of the synagogue in admitting persons to this office without prescribing to them any specific age. As with the Jews, so with the primitive Christians, lads at an early age, if duly qualified, might serve as their readers. There are instances on record of children who, even at seven years of age, were employed in this service; and others at eight, ten, and twelve years of age. Young men of noble birth, especially, aspired to this office.<sup>2</sup> Chrysostom himself began his public ministry at Antioch as a reader, from which he was advanced to the office of deacon. Justinian, however, established the canonical age of the reader at eighteen.

At the consecration of the reader, the bishop made an address, setting forth the duties of the office and the qualifications of the candidate, and delivered to him a copy of the Scriptures, saying, "Take this roll, and be thou a reader; and faithfully fulfilling this office, thou shalt have part with those that minister in the word." The Apostolical Constitutions prescribe a prayer on the ordination of the reader.<sup>3</sup>

It was his duty to hold in safekeeping the copy of the Bible, especially in times of persecution; and to read the lessons in the *missa catechumenorum*, or first lesson to which catechumens attended, extending to the prayers which preceded the communion. The reading-desk was at some distance from the pulpit. At the latter place, and in the communion service, the reading of the Gospels was not the duty of the reader, but of one of the superior order of the clergy.

In the Western church the subdeacons soon sought means to bring the readers under subordination to them, and accordingly this order finally ceased from the church. In the cloisters and chapters, on the contrary, they acquired still increasing considera-

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\* *Hodie episcopus, cras alius; hodie diaconus, qui cras lector; hodie presbyter, qui cras laicus.*—*De Præscrip. Hæret.* c. 41.

tion, and at a later period, as they were withdrawn from the service of the church, they were transferred to the professorships of philosophy and theology in the universities and other schools of learning.

The reading of the Scriptures constituted an important part of public worship from the earliest ages of Christianity. Chrysostom asserts that "if a man were to frequent the church diligently, and to listen attentively therein, although he read not the Bible at home, one year would be sufficient to give him a good knowledge of it."<sup>4</sup>

On other occasions he complains of the inattention of the congregation to this part of the religious service in terms so graphic, that a few extracts are subjoined to illustrate the custom of the age and the relative duties of the reader and of the deacon in the public services of the church:—

"The deacon standeth here, and crieth aloud in the name of all, 'Let us attend.' He frequently repeateth it; for his is as the common voice of the church, and yet no one attendeth. The reader then commenceth the prophecy of Isaiah, still no one attendeth; notwithstanding prophecy is not of man. Then he crieth aloud, so that all can hear, 'Thus saith the Lord,' and still no one attendeth." And in another discourse, in which he reproaches his hearers with a deficiency of scriptural knowledge, he says, "Nevertheless, the Scriptures are read to you two or three times every week. The reader ascendeth, and first saith by which prophet, apostle, or evangelist the portion of Scripture which he is about to read was written; and he then giveth you the heads of it, that not only the contents, but also the occasion of the writing and the author may be known to you." And in another sermon he says, "When the reader hath risen and said, 'Thus saith the Lord,' the deacon, stepping forward, commandeth every one to be silent; but he doeth not this to honour the reader, but to honour him who speaketh through the reader to all. We are servants, my beloved; we speak not our own words, but the words of God. The epistles, which are daily read, came from heaven. Tell me, I pray you, were now, while we are all here assembled, a man with a golden girdle to enter, proudly advancing and calling upon every one to give way before him; and were he to declare that he was sent by an earthly king, and that he brought a letter, addressed to our whole city upon urgent matters,—would ye not all crowd together? Would ye not, without the summons of the deacon, maintain the greatest silence? Methinks ye would; *for I have heard letters of the emperor read aloud here.*"

## § 2. OF PRECENTORS, SINGERS.

THE singing of psalms and hymns was an important part of public worship, both in the temple and synagogue service of the Jews, and in the worship of the apostolic and primitive churches. Eph. v. 19, 20; Colos. iii. 16. The whole congregation took part in this delightful service, employing, no doubt, only rude and simple melodies which all could chant. The reading of the Scriptures was diversified by intervals of psalmody, in which all were accustomed to unite with one voice and heart.\*

Jerome, by his complaint of this theatrical style of sacred music, gives sufficient evidence that in the last half of the fourth century such music was to some extent prevalent in the church; and it is remarkable that this part of public worship was restricted by the Council of Laodicea,<sup>1</sup> A. D. 320, 372, to a distinct order in the church, styled by them *κανονικοὶ ψάλται*, *canonical singers*. These went into the singers' seats and sang *from a book*, ἀπὸ διφθέρας. This phrase has been understood by many to refer to a singing-book, in which were set the notes of their music; others, with greater probability, understand by it the collection of psalms which was in use, like a modern hymn-book. The Psalms of David were chiefly used in the ancient church. The above restriction was designed to correct abuses and suitably to regulate this part of worship. The *subjects* of their psalmody were submitted to the control of the bishops or presbyters. But all that related to the *performance* of the music *as an art* was left to the singers. But these *κανονικοὶ ψάλται* were only a temporary provision to regulate and restore the singing to some tolerable degree of harmony, and it continued to be the usage of the church for the whole assembly to join in singing.<sup>2</sup> Choristers were not appointed earlier than the fourth century to lead the singing. Sometimes they and the congregation sang alternately in responses; again, they named the tune and sang a line, when they were followed by the congre-

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\* The following extract from Jerome expresses his strong aversion to an artistic, theatrical style of music, which must of necessity be limited to a few:—Nec in tragœdorum modum, guttur et fauces dulci medicamine colliniendas, ut in ecclesia theatrales moduli audiantur et cantica; sed in timore, in opere, in scientia Scripturarum. . . . Sic cantet servus Christi ut non vox canentis sed verba placeant, quæ leguntur, ut spiritus malus qui erat in Saule ejiciatur ab his qui similiter ab eo possidentur, et non introducatur in eos qui de Dei domo scenam fecere populorum.—*Comment. in Eph. v.*



gation. It was also the duty of the chorister to sing or chant the benedictions and songs of praise, the sacramental hymns and responses, and whatever required peculiar skill in the art of singing. The number of choristers appears to have varied in different churches, and, perhaps, at different times. The church at Constantinople had at one time twenty choristers and one hundred and ten readers.<sup>3</sup>

Systems of psalmody, both plain and complicated, were early introduced into the church. The singer in the Latin church is sometimes called *psalmista* or *psalmistanus*, but more frequently *cantor*. The term ὑποβολεῖς also occurs in connection with the singers, who may be styled *psalmi pronuntiatores*, or *succentores*, leaders. Their office was to begin the psalm or hymn, and thus lead the singing, so that others might unite their voices harmoniously with them.

No special form for the ordination of singers is prescribed; and by the fourth Council of Carthage, c. 10, the presbyter is authorized to make the appointment without the knowledge or authority of the bishop. This commission the presbyter delivered in these words: *Vide ut quod ore cantas, corde credas; et quod corde credis, operibus comprobes*. See that what thou singest with thy mouth thou believest also with thy heart; and that what thou believest in thy heart, thou confirmest in thy life. In the Catholic church the singers did not constitute a separate class, and in some other churches they were reckoned with the readers.

But though the singers have not been uniformly classed with the priesthood, they have ever been held in great respect, as appears from the establishment of schools of sacred music, and from the peculiar attention which was paid to them; especially to the instructors of them. Such schools were established as early as the sixth century, and became common in various parts of Europe, particularly in France and Germany. These schools were very much patronized by Gregory the Great, under whom they obtained great celebrity. From them originated the famous *Gregorian chant*, a plain system of church music which the choir and the people sang in unison. The prior, or principal of these schools, was a man of great consideration and influence. The name of this officer at Rome, was *archicantor ecclesiæ Romanæ*; and, like that of *prelatus cantor* in their chapters and collegiate churches, it was a highly respectable and lucrative office.<sup>4</sup>

## § 3. OF ACOLYTHS, ACOLYTHISTS, OR ACOLYTES.

The word ἀκόλουθος denotes a servant. The office corresponds to that of the Roman *apparitor*, or *bedellus*, a beadle. The word is evidently of Greek origin. Hesychius defines it by ὁ νεώτερος παῖς, δεράπων, ὁ περὶ τὸ σῶμα, a servant, or personal attendant. This being the origin of the word, it is remarkable that the office was, in the opinion of Bingham, for four hundred years an office of the *Latin* church, and adopted from them by the Greek at a late period. This may have arisen from the fact that the subdeacons in the Greek church have a close analogy with the acolytes in the Latin, and that name was commonly retained in that church. But the term ἀκόλουθος, *acolyte*, was derived from the Greek church, and the office is explicitly mentioned by Eusebius, who relates that an inconceivable number of presbyters, deacons, acolytes, and others, attended the bishops at the Council of Nice,<sup>1</sup> which was composed almost exclusively of delegates from the Eastern church. We may therefore reasonably infer that the office was common to both the Eastern and Western churches, though more frequently mentioned by writers in the latter.

The acolytes, as their name implies, were the immediate attendants and followers of the bishop, especially in public processions and on festive occasions, and were employed by them in errands of every kind. Their duties in regard to religious worship, as specified by the Council of Carthage, were to light the candles, and to bring the wine and water for the eucharist.<sup>2</sup> They were constant attendants of the bishop and his personal servants, at home and abroad. Cyprian, on one occasion, sent supplies to Christian martyrs in the mines by the hands of a subdeacon and three acolytes.<sup>3</sup>

In case of communion in private houses, which became quite frequent in the seventh century, their duty was to take charge of the consecrated elements and the sacramental vessels which were requisite for the occasion. The lights were necessary for religious worship in the evening; but it was a custom, as we learn from Jerome, in the fourth century, to light the candles in the reading of the Gospel as a token of joy,\* which is sufficient evidence of the early introduction of the senseless rite of burning wax candles at the altar, as is still customary in the Roman Catholic churches.

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\* Ad signum lætitiæ demonstrandum.—*Cont. Vigilant.* c. 3.

From the writings of Cyprian and Tertullian, it appears that the office of acolyte was instituted as early as the third century. In the Roman Catholic church it is still recognised in the boys who are seen in attendance upon the priest in the celebration of the mass, and the taper-bearers in religious processions.

#### § 4. OF OSTIARII, OR DOORKEEPERS.

THESE, though the last of the lower orders, were of a more elevated rank than the modern sexton, with whom they should not be confounded. The ostiarii belonged, in a sense, to the clerical order; while the sexton is the attendant and waiter on the clergy. Their duties were more comprehensive than the latter, in that they separated the catechumens from believers, and excluded disorderly persons from the church.<sup>1</sup> They closed the doors of the church, not only at the conclusion of religious worship, but during the services, (especially after the first part of it,) called the *missa catechumenorum*. Their office was particularly needful during the prevalence of the secret discipline of the church, to guard the sacred mysteries from the intrusion of the profane. In times of persecution, it was their duty to give private notice of the secret assemblies of the church. At a later period, particularly in the Western church, they had the care of the ornaments of the church and of the altar. It afterward became their duty to ornament the church and the altar on festive occasions; to guard the court of the church and sepulchres of the dead; to present the book to the preacher; to ring the bell; to sweep the church; and on Thursday of passion-week to make preparation for the consecration of the chrism, or anointing oil.<sup>2</sup> They are sometimes called *mansionarii* and *janitores*.

The most probable explanation of the establishment of this order is that they were made doorkeepers of the *Christian church*, in imitation of those of the Jewish tabernacle. It was another of the corrupt imitations of the Jewish church which became so common after the establishment of the hierarchy. The necessity of the office, both in administering the secret discipline of the church, and in times of persecution, had also its influence in the institution of this order. It was established in the third century, and discontinued in the Eastern church in the seventh century. In the Western church it was continued to a later period. The churches of Constantinople had twenty-five doorkeepers. In Rome the number was less, but the office was longer continued, and held in greater

consideration. Deacons were originally the doorkeepers; and deaconesses guarded the entrance to the apartments of the women.

The customary forms of ordination are prescribed in the fourth Council of Carthage, c. 9, and the ceremony of *delivering the keys* is derived from the book of secret discipline.

## § 5. OF THE SUBORDINATE SERVANTS OF THE CHURCH AND OF THE CLERGY.

1. *THE copiatæ*, undertakers, grave-diggers, sextons.<sup>1</sup> These were intrusted *with the care of funerals and the burial of the dead*. They are called *vespillones*, *bispellones*, *νεχροθάπται*; also *ordo fossariorum*,<sup>2</sup> *fossores*,<sup>3</sup> grave-diggers—*λεχτικάριοι*,<sup>4</sup> bearers of the bier, and *collegiati*, *decani*, collegiates and deans.

The last offices of affection to the dead were at first performed by the friends of the deceased. But in the fourth century this order of men was instituted by Constantine the Great to assist in these solemnities.<sup>5</sup> It was the duty of the *copiatæ*, both to prepare the grave and to act as pall-bearers; and generally to perform all the rites of interment. Constantine limited their number to eleven hundred. They were sometimes reckoned as a class of the clergy. They received compensation from the rich and from the public treasury, and enjoyed certain privileges of office.

2. *The Parabolani*. Their office was *to take care of the sick*, particularly of the poor who were affected with contagious diseases, and to attend to the interment of such as died of these diseases—duties which, in the earlier periods of the church, the Christians themselves failed not to perform at the peril of their own lives. The *copiatæ* were of great importance, especially during the prevalence of epidemic diseases. The common belief is that the *parabolani* took their name from the hazardous office in which they were employed—*ἔργον παράβολον*, *negotium periculosum*. Others derive it from *παράβολοι*, in the sense of *bestiarii*, persons of great courage and desperate character, who exposed themselves in combat with the wild beasts.<sup>6</sup>

They were chiefly limited to Egypt and Asia Minor; where they were the more necessary by reason of the contagious diseases of these countries. Still they were regarded with jealousy, as dangerous disturbers of the peace; and for this reason, efforts were frequently made to diminish their number.<sup>7</sup> Very few traces of them appear in the history of the Western church. Their appointment

appears to have been subsequent to that of the *copiatæ*, in the fifth century. They were a troublesome and dangerous order, and accordingly were soon discontinued. They were men from the lower classes; and acting in the interests of the bishop, were his agents and adherents in occasional conflicts with the state. In Alexandria, they were restricted by Theodosius, A. D. 416, to five hundred, and degraded from the rank of the clergy.

3. The *sacrista*, *sacristanus*, and *sacristarius* was much the same as *treasurer*, the keeper of the sacred things, *sacrorum custos*, *qui ecclesiæ secretum curat*.<sup>8</sup> They appear to have been essentially the same as the *cimeliarchs*, the keepers of the sacred things deposited in the church. The office designated by this appellation differed considerably, however, at different times. It indicates those who were intrusted with the care of the churches, the sacred utensils, and all that belonged to the church. Presbyters were usually chosen to this office.

4. The *custos*, *custor*, *ædituus*, closely resembled the *sacristan*. Sometimes he is called *capellanus*, which denotes particularly the keeper of the altar.

The name of *custodes* was also given to watchmen who acted as a guard to large churches by night.

At a later period it became customary to keep a guard in many sacred places, particularly in Palestine; such as Bethlehem, Golgotha, the Mount of Olives, and the Holy Sepulchre. These were called *custodes locorum sacrorum*.

5. The *campanarii*, *campanatores*, were the bell-ringers; an office which of necessity has been instituted since the introduction of bells in the ninth century. Their usual business was to light the church, and ring the bell for religious worship.

6. The *matricularii* were intrusted with the care of the church, in which they were accustomed to sleep; they also had a specific office to perform in public processions.

7. The *parafrenarii* were the coachmen of the higher clergy, who had also the care of their stables, horses, and coaches. They were sometimes reckoned among the number of the clergy, but of an inferior order.<sup>9</sup>

#### § 6. OF OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH NOT BELONGING TO THE CLERGY.

PERSONS of this description differed greatly in their rank and influence respectively, as well as in the time and circumstances of



their appointment. They were chosen at one time from the clergy, at another from the laity. In the service of the church they often sustained nearly the same relations as did the archbishops and other dignitaries when acting as ministers of state. They were chiefly influential in Rome and Constantinople, rather than in the provincial dioceses. The influence of some of these officers was often greater even than that of a prime-minister, archbishop, or patriarch, just as the most important concerns of church and state are often controlled by a secretary or counsellor. Officers of this class, however, had little or no concern with the *appropriate* duties of the ministry. And we will treat of them very briefly in the order of their importance, proceeding from the lowest to the highest.

1. The *mansionarii*, *stewards*, to whom was intrusted the care of the *church-glebes*, styled also *προσμονάριοι*, *παραμονάριοι*.

2. *Οἰκονόμοι*, persons appointed to assist in managing the possessions of the church. This office was originally created to check the insatiable cupidity of the bishops, and to restrain their independent control of the revenues of the church. But they soon found means to defeat this salutary expedient by taking the appointment of such officers into their own hands, and thus securing men who were in their interests. The *mansionarii* were totally distinct from the stewards of cloisters, and other similar establishments of the middle ages.

3. *Cimeliarchs*, *κεμηλιάρχαι*, *thesaurii*, *sacellii*, *sacristæ*, different from the sacristans or sextons before mentioned, *treasurers*. The *cimeliarchs* were intrusted with the care of rare and costly things which belonged to the churches, whether acquired by purchase or by donations. The *μέγας σκευοφύλαξ*, chancellor of the exchequer at Constantinople, was a dignitary of high rank: the *μέγας σακελλάριος* was treasurer of the cloisters, prefect of monasteries, etc.

4. *Notarii*. The Greek word *νοτάριος* was of late origin in that language. Previously, the corresponding terms were *γραμματεὺς*, *ὑπογραφεὺς*, *ὑποδοχεὺς*, *ὀξυγράφος*, *ταχυγράφος*, etc., neither of which exactly expresses the meaning of the term *notarius*. This denotes a *scribe*, and always implies that he acts in some *official capacity*, as the scribe or secretary of a deliberative assembly, or the clerk of a court. The *notarii* were frequently employed by private persons, but retained even then their official character. They were copyists and translators of homilies, records, etc.<sup>1</sup> It was particularly their duty to write memoirs of such as suffered

martyrdom,<sup>2</sup> and to record the protocols of synods and doings of councils.<sup>3</sup> They also acted the part of a modern secretary of legation,<sup>4</sup> and were again the agents of bishops and patriarchs in exercising a supervision over remote districts of their diocese. In this capacity they frequently attained to great influence and honour.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, the notary was himself one of the clergy, and the constant attendant of the bishop. The office was instituted as early as the fourth century. At the Council of Chalcedon, A. D. 451, there was one John, a presbyter, *πρῶτος τῶν νοταρίων*.

The various services of a secretary or scribe in preparing writings, whether of a judicial or extrajudicial character, were chiefly performed by men of the clerical order, because they were the best qualified for these duties.

5. *Apocrisarii*, or *responsales*. They were often the delegates and representatives, the *chargé d'affaires*, of the bishop at the court. As such they belonged usually to the priesthood, but there were often apocrisarii of a secular character, legates or ambassadors from one court to another, like the *cancellarii*, *consiliarii*, *secretarii*, *referendarii*, etc. The title of *apocrisary* was appropriated particularly to the pope's deputy or agent, who resided at the court of Constantinople to receive the pope's orders and the emperor's answers. The existence of such an agent at that court has been called in question without good reason. Both Leo and Gregory the Great once resided there in that capacity, and there are other unequivocal notices of the office in the fifth and sixth centuries.<sup>6</sup>

After the re-establishment of the Western empire, an accredited agent of the pope of a like character was accustomed to reside at the French court; he was sometimes called *capellanus*, *palatii custos*, corresponding to a modern *chargé d'affaires*.

The most celebrated cloisters and abbeys, as well as the archbishops, had also their agents at Rome. Since the ninth century they have had the name of *ambassadors*. The pope's legate in modern history is but a continuation of this under certain modifications.

6. *Syncelli*, *σύνκελλοι*. The chief *syncellus* at Constantinople was an officer of high rank, and the *syncelli* were generally chosen from the bishops and metropolitans to this office.<sup>7</sup> The prelates of Rome had also their *syncelli*; but the office in time degenerated into an empty name.<sup>8</sup> Their business is said to have been originally to attend upon the patriarchs and prelates as their spiritual advisers, and as witnesses of their deportment and the purity of

their manners. The origin of this office, according to Klaussing,<sup>9</sup> is to be sought in the corrupt morals of the bishops, who might be held in check by the presence of these clerical attendants.

7. The *syndici*, *σύνδικοι*, *defensores*. Their business was to redress the wrongs of the poor and the injured; to defend the rights of the church; to exercise a supervision over the property of the church; to settle disputes, manage lawsuits, etc. They were known in the church as early as the fourth or fifth century. They were the spiritual advocates, the attorney-generals of the church, to defend its legal rights. In the Western church they belonged to the laity; in the Eastern, to the clergy. Like every other office of the church, its prerogatives were often perverted for the accomplishment of sinister ends.

8. There was still another class of officers, who may perhaps be styled *patrons*, *protectors*, or *defenders of the faith*. By whatever name they are called, they were divided into three subdivisions, and in the middle ages, were magistrates of the highest authority in church and state. 1. Learned men, knights, and counts, who were patrons and guardians of different religious bodies. 2. The agents of the church, patrons who, especially in the absence of the bishop, acted in his place in the administration of affairs, both of church and state. Under this head may be classed those who, under the name of landlords, exercised a territorial jurisdiction in matters relating to the church. 3. Kings and emperors who claimed to be *patrons of the church* and *defenders of the faith*. The Roman Catholic princes of Germany and the kings of France have been peculiarly emulous of this honour.

## § 7. OF OCCASIONAL OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH.

1. *Catechists*. In view of the importance in which catechetical instructions were held, it is truly surprising that none were permanently designated to this office. The name of catechist, indeed, appears early in the history of the church, and is of common occurrence, but catechists did not for some time constitute a distinct order. Such instructions were given in part by the bishops themselves, who were, by virtue of their office, the chief catechists, and had the oversight of all such exercises in which presbyters, deacons, readers, and exorcists bore a part. The deaconesses, and aged women also, acted as catechists for their sex. But the bishops gradually declined the duty of instructing the candidates for ad-

mission to the church, and devolved this upon the subordinate orders of the clergy, who in turn were relieved from it by the institution of a distinct order of catechists for this purpose. In the church of Africa, and apparently also at Antioch, this duty was transferred to such as had distinguished themselves as readers. Cyprian appointed Optatus, a reader, to this office.<sup>1</sup> Chrysostom was first a reader, then a catechist, at Antioch. At Alexandria, where men of education, eminent for learning, often applied for instruction and admission to the church, it became necessary that men of like distinction for learning and talents should be their teachers, to solve the doubts and refute the philosophy of these learned pagan catechumens. This gave importance to the office of catechist at Alexandria, and was the occasion of the famous theological school in that place. The catechists of that school, by their talents and learning, soon gathered about them a body of the learned, toward whom they sustained the relations rather of a modern lecturer or theological professor than of a common catechist.

2. *Exorcists.* Whatever may have been the nature of the malady denominated demoniacal possession, it is undeniable that this manifestation was of common occurrence in the early ages of the church, and was ascribed solely to the influence of malignant spirits molesting the bodies and the minds of men. Instances of this nature were so frequent, that these demoniacs constituted a distinct class of Christians. The evil spirits by which they were molested were believed to be subject to the authority of Jesus Christ; and the primitive Christians believed themselves to be invested with authority and power, by calling upon Christ and adjuring the evil spirits in his name, to expel them and heal the demoniacs, as did our Lord when on earth. With entire confidence they appealed to their bitterest enemies in attestation of the reality of these demoniacal possessions, and of the cure of them effected, by no magical art, but simply through faith in Christ. They appealed confidently to this their power over unclean spirits, as one of their strongest arguments for the reality of the Christian religion, and employed it as one powerful means of winning converts to their faith. Justin Martyr, about the middle of the second century, says, in his *Apology* addressed to the enemies of Christianity—"Many Christians throughout the world, and *even in your own city*, simply by calling upon the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and without any other adjuration or charm, have healed



many that were possessed of evil spirits; and still continue to heal such.”<sup>2</sup> Irenæus, a little later in the same century, says “that many, through grace received from the Son of God, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, heal the sick, cast out devils, and raise the dead; that multitudes throughout the whole world daily exercise these gifts, without any magic charm or secret art, merely by calling upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” In the same connection he also says, that many who have been healed of unclean spirits have been brought to believe in Christ and become members of the church.<sup>3</sup> Tertullian of Carthage, in the beginning of the third century, appeals to Scapula, the Roman governor of that province, that he has even in his own board of officers those who have received these kind offices from Christians, however they may exclaim against them; “for the secretary himself is one who has been delivered from an evil spirit. One may thank a Christian for the healing of a relative; another, for that of a son. And many honourable men there are (for of those of the common people we will not speak) who have been healed of unclean spirits or of diseases.”<sup>4</sup>

The credulity and superstition of the church increased continually the cases of these demoniacs so called, as the instances of actual possession diminished, if, indeed, there were such at any time subsequent to the age of the apostles. Demoniacs, *energumens*, became in large cities a distinct class of Christians, subject to peculiar discipline. The care of these gave rise to a new order of officers, the *exorcists*, whose duty was, in general, to watch over and take care of these unfortunate beings, to whom a particular place was assigned in the church; certain services were performed with particular reference to them; and from others they were excluded. Their food, their clothing, their daily employment, and the means used for their restoration to health were under the charge of these exorcists.

Man in his unrenewed state, and especially the idolatrous nations, were supposed also to be under the peculiar power of Satan. Accordingly, on the reception of candidates into the church by baptism, it became customary, in process of time, to require of them a formal renunciation of the world and of the devil, in connection with certain forms of exorcism which were administered by exorcists. These baptismal exorcisms were a later ordinance than those of the *energumens*, and continued after the latter had ceased.

Exorcists, as an inferior order, are supposed to have been insti-



tuted near the beginning of the third century, in the age of Tertullian, Origen, and Cyprian. The exorcisms of the *energumens*, and even this class of Christians, ceased in the Eastern church as early as the beginning of the fifth century, and in the Western church somewhat later. In the church in Spain they continued longest. But the order of exorcists remained much longer in the church; and in the Roman Catholic church continues, under certain modifications, unto the present time, as is seen not only in the superstitious use of holy water, but in the formalities of baptism. The Nestorian church very early discontinued all exorcisms. They are now discontinued in the Greek church, and have gradually disappeared from the reformed churches, though Luther and Melancthon retained them.

3. *Interpreters*, *ἑρμηνευταί*. This office is supposed to have arisen among the Jews of Palestine, who spoke the Syrochaldaic language. Their ancient Scriptures were in the Hebrew language, and those of the New Testament in the Greek. Both in the synagogue and in the Christian church, therefore, it was equally necessary, when their Scriptures were read, to translate them into the language of the common people. The primitive church would not, like the Romish, worship in a tongue unknown to the people.

The duty of the *hermeneutai* was to translate from one tongue into another, where people of different languages were commingled; like the Greek and Syriac—Latin and Punic. They had a seat also with the bishop, to assist in translating the correspondence of the church into different languages—to interpret synodical records, etc.

Readers and deacons were employed as interpreters for the preacher, when they were competent for the discharge of such duties; but whoever performed this service, must of necessity be regarded as acting the part of a religious teacher, and, in this sense, as belonging to the priesthood. The bishop's assistant translators might be chosen from among the laity, when no suitable person belonging to the clergy could be found; and though he was little else than a notary or scribe, he was honoured with a place among the clergy.

These interpreters are to be carefully distinguished from that class of persons of whom Paul speaks, 1 Cor. xii. 10; xiv. 26, as endowed with miraculous gifts for the interpretation of what was spoken in an unknown tongue. These *hermeneutai* belonged only to the apostolic churches, and must have ceased with the cessation

of that gift of tongues which made that office necessary. But the name may have been retained and transferred to another totally distinct.

4. *Capellani*. The name is derived from *capella*, which primarily means a certain kind of hood. In the fifth century it became the name of oratories or *private churches*, which were built about that time in France, and afterward became common in the West. The first instance of this form of private worship occurs in the life of Constantine, who constituted his military tent a place for religious worship in the open field. Probably the μαρτύριον ἐπὶ μνήμῃ τῶν ἀποστόλων, which, according to Eusebius, was erected by Constantine, was a sort of *court-church*. Certain it is that we read of the *clerici pallatii*, *sacelli regii*, court-preachers, under the succeeding emperors. The chief among these were called πάπας τοῦ παλατίου, etc., answering to the *capellani*, *regii*, *archi-capellani*, *summi sacellani*, etc., under the monarchs of France, Germany, and England. The *capellanus*, then, was the *chaplain* or minister of these *private* or *court* chapels.

After the crusades, multitudes of places where *sacred relics* were preserved were also called *chapels*, and the persons who had the care of these relics received also the name of *chaplains*, though they had no stated ministerial office, but occasionally officiated by special permission.

## CHAPTER X.

### OF ELECTIONS TO ECCLESIASTICAL OFFICES.

THIS subject has been discussed at length in another work,\* and must in this place be treated with greater brevity; but it belongs to the archæology of the Christian church to specify the different forms of election and appointment by which its offices were filled.

#### § 1. OF ELECTION BY LOT.

It is customary to class under this head the first appointment to office that was made in the church—that of Matthias, to supply the place of the apostate Judas. Acts i. 15–26. “They gave forth their lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias.” But it may well be doubted whether this selection was made by actual casting of lots. Mosheim has shown that the phrase *ἔδωκαν κλήρους αὐτῶν* may indicate an elective vote by the assembly.<sup>1</sup> Resort, however, was occasionally had to the lot, in elections, but the use of this and of all magical arts was discontinued by the church. This form of election was neither peculiar to any sect, nor prevalent at any given time, nor applicable to any one case; but was adopted as occasion required. The election was little else than a decision between several rival candidates.

#### § 2. OF ELECTIONS BY VOTE OF THE CHURCH.

EVEN the appointment of Matthias was with the *consent and co-operation of the church*, if not by their elective vote. “Peter,” says Chrysostom, “did not appoint him: it was the act of all.”<sup>1</sup> And such is the opinion of many learned men. The seven deacons confessedly were chosen by the church. Acts vi. 1–6. The delegates of the churches were chosen by the churches. One such Paul distinctly specifies as *χειροτονηθεὶς ὑπὸ τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν*, chosen by

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\* Apostolical and Primitive Church. Chap. iv. pp. 53–86.

the churches "*with the lifting up of hands*," as it is in the margin. 2 Cor. viii. 19. Such being the rule of the church, that elections shall be made by the united body of believers, it is to be presumed that the apostles themselves acted in conformity with it, even when they are said to have made the appointment of presbyters and teachers. Acts xiv. 23; 2 Tim. ii. 1; Tit. i. 5. Such appointment or nomination by no means excludes the consent and vote of the church. The advice and consent of the churches were demanded on other occasions. Acts xv. 1 *et seq.*; 1 Cor. v. 2; 2 Cor. ii. 7 *et seq.*

Clemens Romanus is the best interpreter of the apostle's sentiments, and the earliest witness that can be obtained on this subject. This writer informs us that the apostles appointed and ordained the first ministers of the church, and "then gave directions how, when they should die, other chosen and approved men should succeed to their ministry." Wherefore we cannot think those may justly be thrown out of their ministry who were either appointed by them, or afterward by other eminent men, *with the consent of the whole church*, *συνευδοκησάσης τῆς ἐκκλησίας πάσης*.<sup>2</sup> Those persons who received, in this manner, the concurring suffrages of the church, were to be men of tried character, and of good report with all, *μεμαρτυρημένους τε πολλοῖς χρόνοις ὑπὸ πάντων*. This concurrence of the whole church, based upon their previous acquaintance with the candidates, evinces clearly the co-operation of the church in the appointment of its ministers; and that this intervention of the church was not merely a power of negating an appointment made by some other authority.\*

The fullest evidence that bishops and presbyters were chosen by the people, is also derived from Cyprian. It was, according to his authority, a rule of Divine appointment that a minister should be chosen in the presence of the people, and should be publicly acknowledged and approved as worthy of the office.† He further says, that the act of ordination should in no instance be solemnized

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\* The apostles appointed bishops and deacons,—*Καὶ μεταξὺ ἐπινομήν δεδώκασιν, ὅπως ἐὰν κοιμηθῶσιν, διαδέξωνται ἕτεροι δεδοκιμασμένοι ἄνδρες τὴν λειτουργίαν αὐτῶν. Τοὺς οὖν κατασταθέντας ὑπ' ἐκείνων, ἢ μεταξὺ ὑφ' ἑτέρων ἐλλογίμων ἀνδρῶν, συνευδοκησάσης τῆς ἐκκλησίας πάσης, καὶ λειτουργήσαντας ἀμέμπτως τῷ ποιμνίῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ ταπεινοφροσύνης, ἡσύχως καὶ ἀβαναύσως, μεμαρτυρημένους τε πολλοῖς χρόνοις ὑπὸ πάντων, τούτους οὐ δικαίως νομίζομεν ἀποβαλέσθαι τῆς λειτουργίας*.—CLEM. ROM. Ep. 1, ad Corinth. § 44.

† Plebe presente sub omnium oculis deligatur, dignus atque idoneus publico judicio ac testimonio comprobetur.—*Epist.* 68. Comp. *Epist.* 52, 33.

without the knowledge and assistance of the people, so that the crimes of the bad may be detected, and the merits of the good made known. In this manner the ordination becomes regular and valid, *justa et legitima*. Such, he observes, was the example of the apostles, not only in the appointment of bishops and ministers, but also of deacons. And all this was done to prevent the intrusion of unworthy men into the sacred office.<sup>3</sup> Again, he says of Cornelius, "that he was made bishop agreeably to the will of God and of Christ, by the testimony of almost all the clergy, and *the suffrage of the people then present*."<sup>4</sup>

It is worthy of remark that the original word χειροτονεῖν, which the apostle uses in several instances, signifies, both in classical and ecclesiastical writers, *to vote by uplifted hands*. Demosthenes, in his oration for the crown, says that the people ὁ δῆμος elected him ἐχειροτόνησαν, as a commissary. On another occasion he makes use of the same terms in saying that they chose him to deliver an oration over those who fell at Chersonæa; and the word he several times uses to express an election by vote of the people.<sup>5</sup> Antisthenes, ridiculing the people of Athens for appointing their generals by popular vote, without reference to their qualifications, advises the Athenians to vote ψηφίσασθαι that asses are horses, which would be no more absurd than that men without experience should become generals merely *by election*—μόνον δὲ χειροτονηθέντες.

Ignatius directs the church at Philadelphia to choose a deacon, and the church at Smyrna to choose a delegate to go to Antioch, in both instances using the same word χειροτονησαι to express this election by a popular vote. In all these instances, and such examples might be multiplied indefinitely, the word cannot possibly denote a consecration or induction into office by *the laying on of hands*, as prelatists contend is its meaning, but it indicates a popular vote *by uplifted hand*.

That the appointment of the clergy to their office was dependent upon the choice of the people, is confirmed by the evidence from the example of Alexander Severus, who reigned from A. D. 222 to 235. Whenever he was about to appoint any governor of a province or receiver of the public revenue, he publicly proposed their names, desiring the people to make evidence against them, if any one could prove them guilty of any crime, but assuring them that if they accused them falsely, it should be at the peril of their lives; for he said "it was unreasonable that, when *the Christians and*



*Jews did this in propounding those whom they ordained their priests and ministers, the same should not be done in the appointment of governors of provinces, in whose hands the lives and fortunes of men were intrusted.*"<sup>6</sup>

It may perhaps be said that all this is only proof of a negative or *testimonial* choice on the part of the people, and that this *propounding* of the candidates presupposes a previous appointment of which the people were only invited to express their approbation. True, indeed, the clergy or the presbytery, or the bishop or presbyter, on resigning his office, often took the lead in these elections, by proposing or nominating the candidate; but then followed the vote of the people, which was not a mere testimonial suffrage, but really a *decisive* and *elective* vote.

Besides, there are many instances when the people made choice of some one as bishop or presbyter without any preliminary nomination or propounding of the candidate. Athanasius of Alexandria, A. D. 326, was chosen to his office by the suffrages of all the people, *ψήφῳ τοῦ λαοῦ παντός*.<sup>7</sup> Eusebius of Cæsarea was made archbishop against his own will, A. D. 314, before he had even been baptized, the people, *ὁ δῆμος ἅπας*, compelling the bishops to consecrate him to the office.<sup>8</sup> Ambrose was thus appointed bishop of Milan by joint acclamation of all.<sup>9</sup> Martin of Tours was appointed by the people against his own will and that of the bishops.<sup>10</sup> And the same is true of Eustathius at Antioch,<sup>11</sup> Chrysostom at Constantinople,<sup>12</sup> Eraclius at Hippo,<sup>13</sup> and Meletius at Antioch,<sup>14</sup> etc.

The evidence, indeed, is full, that the people co-operated in the election of presbyters, and numerous instances of such co-operation occur in ecclesiastical history. Even the Apostolical Constitutions ordain that a bishop must be "a select person *chosen by the people*."<sup>15</sup>

So also the fourth Council of Carthage decreed\* "that as the bishop might not ordain clergymen without the advice of his clergy, so likewise he should obtain the consent, co-operation, and testimony of the people."

Sometimes, when the opinions of the people were divided between several candidates, it would seem that the people were called to a formal vote, styled *ζήτησις*, *ψήφισμα*, *ψῆφος*, *scrutinium*.<sup>16</sup> But the common method was by acclamation. The people exclaiming

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\* Ut episcopus sine consilio clericorum suorum clericos non ordinet: ita ut civium adsensum et conniventiam et testimonium quærat.

ἄξιός, *fit*; or ἀνάξιός, *unfit*. The Apostolical Constitutions<sup>17</sup> direct that inquiry be three times made whether the candidate is worthy of the office, and that the uniform and concurring response be, He is worthy. In the Latin church the acclamation was *dignus est et justus*.<sup>18</sup>

How long the churches continued to exercise the right unimpaired of electing their own spiritual teachers and rulers cannot be clearly defined. Cyprian, the assertor of episcopal prerogatives in his age, in the middle of the third century, cautiously guards against the infringement of this right, but encroachments began to be made upon it soon after this period. Even in the fourth and fifth centuries instances occur in which the appointment of bishops was effectually resisted by the people. But as early as the fifth century these elections had degenerated into a tumultuous and unequal contest with a crafty and aspiring hierarchy, who had found means so to trammel up and control the elective franchise as practically to direct at pleasure all ecclesiastical appointments. To what a pitch these tumultuous elections were carried at the beginning of the fifth century may be seen from a remarkable description of them by Chrysostom:—"Go witness a popular assembly convened for the election of ecclesiastical officers. Hear the complaints against the minister, manifold and numerous as the individuals of that riotous multitude who are the subjects of church government. All are divided into opposing factions, alike at war with themselves, with the moderator, and with the presbytery. Each is striving to carry his own point; one voting for one, and another for another; and all, equally regardless of that which alone they should consider—the qualifications, intellectual and moral, of the candidate. One is in favour of a man of noble birth; another of a man of fortune who will need no maintenance from the church; and a third, one who has come over to us from the opposite party. One is wholly enlisted for some friend or relative, and another casts his vote for some flatterer. But no one regards the requisite qualifications of the mind and the heart."<sup>19</sup>

### § 3. OF RESTRICTIONS OF THE ELECTIONS.

THE Council of Laodicea, A. D. 360, denied, indeed, the right of suffrage to the *rabble*, τοῖς ὄχλοις. But they carefully distinguished between these and the people, τῷ λαῷ, to whom they did not deny the right. An effort was made, particularly in the Latin

church, to correct the disorders of popular elections without taking away the rights of the people. This they did by the agency of an *interventor*, who was sent among the people to endeavour to unite their votes upon a given person, and thus to secure his election without division or tumult. Symmachus and Gregory the Great encouraged this procedure;<sup>1</sup> but it was received with little approbation, and was soon discontinued, never having been generally adopted. The measure, as Bingham justly remarks, gave the visitor a fair opportunity to ingratiate himself with the people, and promote his own interests among them instead of those of the church.

The Council of Arles, A. D. 452, c. 54, ordered the bishops to nominate three candidates, from whom the clergy and the people should make an election to the vacant office.

Justinian, A. D. 528, for a similar purpose, restricted the right of suffrage to a mixed *aristocracy* in the city. By his laws it was provided, "that when a bishop was to be ordained, the *clergy and chief men* of the city should meet and nominate three persons, drawing up an instrument, and swearing in the customary forms of an oath upon the *Holy Bible*, that they chose them, neither for any gift, nor promise, nor friendship, nor for any other cause; but only because they knew them to be of the catholic faith, of virtuous life, and men of learning. Of these three, the ordaining person was required to choose, at his own discretion, that one whom he judged best qualified."<sup>2</sup>

The Council of Barcelona, A. D. 593, ordered the clergy and the people to make the nomination, and the metropolitan and bishops to determine the election by lot.

But these efforts to restore or retain in some measure the right of suffrage, only show to what extent it was already lost to the people. Thus the right of suffrage was wrested from the people, and was shared in part by the rulers, and in part by the priesthood, who, either by their bishops and suffragans, or by collegiate conventions, often exercised the right without any regard to the people.

But the clergy, who were the first to usurp the rights of election which belonged to the church, were in turn compelled to surrender them to the civil authority. They sometimes protested earnestly against this encroachment of the secular power, but in vain. The Council of Paris, A. D. 557, decreed that "no bishop should be consecrated contrary to the will of the *citizens*, alleging in vindication

of this measure the neglect of ancient usage and of the ordinances of the church. Nor should he attain to that honour who had been appointed by the authority of the rulers, and not by the choice of the people and of the clergy, and whose election had not been ratified by the metropolitan and other bishops of the province." Whoever entered upon his office merely by the authority of the king, they commanded the other bishops not to acknowledge, under penalty of being themselves deposed from office.

But such attempts to restore the *apostolical* and *canonical* forms of election were but seldom made, and were followed by no lasting result. In Spain, the appointment of a bishop, as early as the seventh century, was made dependent entirely upon the king.<sup>3</sup> Under the Carlovingian dynasty in France, it was divided between the rulers and the bishops, without entirely excluding the people. Innocent III., in the thirteenth century, excluded entirely the people, and made the election dependent only on the chapter of the cathedral.<sup>4</sup> In the East the people were excluded much earlier.<sup>5</sup>

#### § 4. OF CERTAIN UNUSUAL FORMS OF ELECTION.

THE examples on record of this description relate only to the appointment of bishops. The appointment by lot, as above described, may with propriety be classed among the unusual forms of election in question. To this may be added,

1. *Elections by Divine authority and Providential manifestations.* To this class belong the appointments which the apostles made by the Divine authority with which they were invested. Tradition informs us that many churches were planted by them, besides those which are mentioned in their writings. John, the apostle, after his return from Patmos, is said by Clemens Alexandrinus to have taken charge of the churches of Asia in the neighbourhood of Ephesus; "in one place *appointing bishops*, in another taking upon himself the regulation of whole churches, and in another, choosing *by lot* one from such as had *been designated by the Spirit*."<sup>1</sup> Then follows a list of young men whom he committed to the instruction of the bishop whom he had ordained, together with an account of the wonderful conversion of these youths.

Ancient history abounds with similar examples of Divine interposition in such appointments.<sup>2</sup> Various Providential circumstances were regarded as Divine designations, such as remarkable tokens of Divine approbation, visions, the lighting of a dove on the head of



the candidate, and the unexpected concurrence of a discordant people in a candidate, as in the case of Martin, bishop of Tours, and Ambrose, bishop of Milan, whose elections were carried by the sudden and unanimous acclamation of the multitude. *Vox populi, vox Dei!*

2. It was at times submitted to some one who was universally respected, to settle a contested election by his own nomination of a bishop. Alexander, bishop of Comana, was elected thus by Gregory Thaumaturgus, who is said to have been directed by special revelation.<sup>3</sup> Bishops were also appointed by nomination, for distant provinces and unorganized districts.<sup>4</sup>

3. Whenever a bishop resigned his office, or was removed to another diocese, he very frequently nominated his successor; but in all such cases on record, the *concurrence* of the people was either presupposed or expressly obtained.<sup>5</sup> The Council of Antioch, A. D. 441, c. 23, forbade such nominations:<sup>6</sup> still they were sometimes made, and a Divine intimation plead in justification. The church at Rome, on the contrary, in the year 503, conceded to the bishops the right of nominating their successors before their decease. This was however a *recommendation* of the candidate rather than an election, but it was as influential as the direct *presentation* of a candidate on the part of a patron. It laid the foundation in part of *ecclesiastical benefices*, that crafty expedient by which so many canonized rights have been usurped. Thus every thing was gradually changed. The church, from being a society of brethren in the mutual enjoyment of common principles, came first under the government of an ambitious oligarchy of the priesthood and of the civil authority, and finally yielded up all religious freedom to an absolute monarchy; a spiritual despotism in total contrast both with the first organization of the church and with the teaching of the apostles, yet claiming apostolical authority for its usurpations.

#### § 5. OF CHURCH PATRONAGE.<sup>1</sup>

THE subject of patronage lies quite beyond the appropriate limits of Christian archæology, but it connects itself so intimately with the history of the church as to require a passing notice.

Clerical patronage was another indication of a corrupt worldly spirit in the church, and an efficient means of increasing the evil. The revenues of the church had become very great, the control of which the bishops had assumed to themselves. The right to pre-



sent their own favourites as candidates became, under these circumstances, a dangerous prerogative, the exercise of which tended to secularize yet more the clergy, to bring the church under a corrupt priesthood, and to debase the sacred relations of a pastor toward his people.

The prevalent opinion is, that the origin of the right of patronage ought to be referred back to the fifth century; and with truth, for the subject of church and state rights began at this period to be publicly asserted and discussed, but the right in question was both asserted and exercised at a date still earlier. The Council of Orange, A. D. 441, ordered that any bishop who should build a church out of his diocese should be allowed to present any candidate to that living, referring the right of consecration to him in whose diocese it was erected, and instructing him to ordain *any one to the clerical office whom the founder might nominate to officiate in the church, and requiring of him a quiet acquiescence in the nomination, if the person presented had already been ordained.* But at the same time it was provided that the entire government of the church should be submitted to him in whose territory the church was built.<sup>2</sup>

It appears from Chrysostom that what is called *secular patronage* prevailed in the church at a date still earlier.<sup>3</sup> He speaks of naming the founders of churches in the prayers of the congregation. In Justinian's Novels, 123, c. 18, A. D. 540, the right of lay-patronage is confirmed and perpetuated by inheritance. The bishop is required to ordain the person nominated, unless disqualified by virtue of the canons. Justinian, however, revoked this ordinance, fourteen years afterward, only allowing to the founder of the church the right to nominate to the bishop certain candidates for the foundation, from whom the bishop should select and ordain one of their number. From the fifth century the name of *patron* becomes familiar in public documents, indicating the relation of a landlord to his dependants, in consequence of his having settled a *parsonage* and *glebe* upon churches which he had built; but the whole system of church patronage in conferring benefices, etc., was not established until about the eighth or ninth century. Thomassin takes notice of several distinct stages in the progress of this system. 1. The right of patronage and presentation extending through five centuries. 2. Ecclesiastical and lay-patronage from Clovis, A. D. 496, to Charlemagne, A. D. 800. 3. Through the dynasty of Charles and his descendants. 4. From the year

1000. The whole he sums up in the following remark:—"It appears, therefore, that *ecclesiastical patronage* was first introduced in the Western church, and *lay-patronage*, at least so far as related to the conferring of benefices, began first in the Eastern church; and that the limited exercise of lay-patronage, in the first centuries after its introduction, was abundantly compensated by the controlling influence which the laity had in the election and ordination of bishops and other incumbents."

In most of the Lutheran, and some of the Reformed churches, the members of the church possess a negative vote concerning the presentation of a minister, but nothing more.

The practical effect of the changes which have been specified in this chapter was to corrupt the church by centralizing influence, wealth, patronage, and power of every kind in the person of the bishop. The right of the people to elect their own spiritual teachers is the great safeguard of the church. He who has a living at his disposal may be ignorant of the true character of his candidate, and indifferent respecting it. But the rich and quiet livings of an establishment will ever be eagerly sought by men unworthy of the office of the sacred ministry; so that the effect of concentrating power and wealth in the clergy, is to afflict the church with a graceless ministry. "Make me a bishop," said an ancient idolater, "make me a bishop, and I will surely be a Christian."

## CHAPTER XI.

### OF ORDINATION.

#### § 1. OF THE ORIGIN OF THE RITE.

THE solemn consecration of a religious teacher to his office, as an institution of religion, is derived from the ordinances of the synagogue, as they were constituted after the Babylonish captivity. The presidents and readers of the synagogue were at first appointed to their office by the formal imposition of hands. Afterward was added the anointing with oil, the investiture with the sacred garments, and the delivery of the sacred utensils. This was called *מלא יד*, *the filling of the hands*, Ex. xxix. 24; Lev. xxi. 10; Num. iii. 3.

The first instance on record of an ordination in a Christian church is that of the seven deacons at Jerusalem, in Acts vi. 1-7. These, though not appointed to the office of religious teachers, were set apart by prayer and the laying on of hands. The consecration of religious teachers and officers of the church is also mentioned in the following passages, Acts xiii. 1-4; xiv. 23; 1 Tim. iv. 14; v. 22; 2 Tim. i. 6. In these passages three particulars are mentioned, *fasting*, *prayer*, and the *laying on of hands*.

The historical fact is undeniable, that the church has, at all times, observed some prescribed mode of inducting into the sacred office those who were appointed to serve in that capacity. Many of the existing offices, being subsequently created, were, indeed, unknown in the first organization of the church, as well as the different rites of ordination and installation. But the injunction that all things should be done decently and in order, the ministry of the word, and the laying on of hands, of which the apostle so often speaks, all imply a consecration to the sacred office by peculiar religious rites. The most ancient liturgies also, both of the Eastern and Western church, prescribe at length the mode of consecration to this office, and in this manner illustrate the solemnity of the transaction in the estimation of the ancient fathers of the church.

It is also worthy of observation, that the various religious sects, schismatics and heretics, almost without exception, observed the rites of ordination.

Until the time of Constantine the Great, the church appears to have adhered to the sublime simplicity of the apostolic rites of ordination. The specifications which follow relate to the regulations of the hierarchy respecting this ordinance.

## § 2. OF DISQUALIFICATIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS FOR ORDINATION.

MANY precautions were exercised by the church to guard against the introduction of unworthy or unsuitable persons into the ministry. Several classes of persons were accordingly excluded from ordination, such as the following:—

1. *Women*.<sup>1</sup> This rule was in conformity with the apostolical precept, 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35; 1 Tim. ii. 11 *et seq.* The appointment of deaconesses was no exception to this rule. They were not appointed to bear rule or to teach, but to perform certain offices which, from a due sense of decency and propriety, were restricted to their own sex.\* They were ordained with the usual formalities in the early periods of the church,<sup>2</sup> but the custom was afterward discontinued.<sup>3</sup>

2. *Catechumens*. To this rule there were a few exceptions, as in the case of Ambrose, Nectarius, etc., but in general it was observed with great strictness.

3. *Neophytes, novices*; men who were deficient in age, or knowledge, or Christian experience,† 1 Tim. iii. 6.

4. *Energumens*; including all who were subject to severe mental or bodily infirmities.

5. *Penitents*; all who for any offence had fallen under the cen-

\* Καὶ ὅτι μὲν Διακονισσῶν τάγμα ἐστὶν εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ εἰς τὸ ἱερατεῖον, οὐδὲ τι ἐπιχωρεῖν ἐπιτρέπειν, ἕνεκεν δὲ σεμνότητος τοῦ γυναικείου γένους, ἣ δι' ὡραν λουτροῦ, ἣ ἐπισκέψεως πᾶδους, ἣ πόνου, καὶ ὅτε γυναιδεῖν σώμα γυναιον, ἵνα μὴ ὑπὸ ἀνδρῶν ἱερουργούντων δεηδεῖν, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ τῆς διακονούσης.—EPIPH. *Hæres.* 79, n. 3.

† Μὴ δεῖν πρόσφατον [προσφάτως] φωτισθέντας προσάγεσθαι ἐν τάγματι ἱερατικῷ. *Conc. Laodic. can.* 3. Conveniens non est, nec ratio, nec disciplina patitur, ut temere vel leviter ordinetur, aut episcopus, aut presbyter, aut diaconus, qui neophytus est. . . . Sed hi, quorum per longum tempus examinata sit vita, et merita fuerint comprobata.—*Conc. Sardic. c.* 10; *Conf. GREGOR. M. Epist. lib.* iv. ep. 50; *lib.* vii. ep. 3; *JUSTIN. Nov.* 6, c. 1; *Nov.* 137, c. 1; *Conc. Paris. A. D.* 629, can. 5.

sure of the church, even though they had been fully restored to the privileges of its fellowship and communion.

6. *Apostates.* All who lived a vicious life after baptism.<sup>4</sup> Offences committed previously were not alleged as a disqualification.<sup>5</sup>

7. *All who were devoted to theatrical pursuits,* or any occupations which disqualified them from receiving baptism.\*

8. *Slaves and freedmen* who were still under some obligation to their former masters. This restriction was made, not by reason of their humble condition, but because such persons could not be supposed to act with the freedom and independence which became the ministerial office.

9. *Soldiers and military men of every description;* for reasons substantially the same as those which are mentioned in the preceding article.

10. *Lawyers and civilians.* Men bearing civil offices, or in any way entangled with the affairs of state, were incapacitated for the sacred office. *Cavendum ab his est,* (says Innocent I.,) *propter tribulationem quod sæpe de his ecclesiæ provenit.* The power of Rome at times overruled this regulation, but the church uniformly sought to separate herself wholly from all connection with the state.<sup>6</sup>

11. *All who were maimed, especially eunuchs.*† To this rule there were exceptions.<sup>7</sup>

12. *Persons who had contracted a second marriage.* This rule is based on an erroneous interpretation of 1 Tim. iii. 2, and Tit. i. 6. To these views of the church may be traced the ancient sentiments respecting the celibacy of the clergy, which prevailed as early as the fourth century, and in the twelfth required of them the vow of celibacy in the Roman Catholic church.

The celibacy of the clergy was not strictly enforced even in the church of Rome until the eleventh century, under Hildebrand. From the fourth to the sixth century the opinions of different parties were greatly divided. Many bishops, particularly in the Eastern church, continued to live in the marriage relations into which they had entered before their consecration. The decrees of councils on this subject are contradictory, some requiring the celibacy of the clergy, and others allowing the contrary course.

\* *Puto nec majestati divinæ, (says Cyprian,) nec evangelicæ disciplinæ congruere, ut pudor et honor ecclesiæ tam turpe et infami contagione fœdetur.*

† *Non infirmitatem, (says Ambrose,) sed firmitatem; non victos, sed victores, postulat ecclesia.*



13. *Those who had received baptism upon their beds in extreme sickness*, or under any urgent necessity, when they might be suspected of having acted not voluntarily but by constraint.<sup>8</sup>

14. *They who had been baptized by heretics.* An exception, however, was made in favour of the Novatians and Donatists.<sup>9</sup>

15. Persons who had been guilty of simoniacal conduct, *i. e.*, of using bribery or any unfair means of obtaining ordination. This species of iniquity, the buying and selling of appointments to spiritual offices, and the obtaining of them by any unfair and dishonourable means, was severely censured by the church. The penalty was deposition from office, both on the part of him who was invested with holy orders, and of those who had assisted in his ordination. The laws of Justinian also required the candidate elect to make oath that he had neither given nor promised, nor would hereafter give any reward, directly or indirectly, as a remuneration for aiding in his appointment.<sup>10</sup>

The exceptions above mentioned are comprised in the following lines:—

Aleo; venator; miles; caupo; aulicus; erro;  
 Mercator; lanius; pincerna; tabellio; tutor,  
 Curator; sponsor; conductor; conciliator; [pronexeta]  
 Patronus causæ; procuratorve forensis;  
 In causa judex civili vel capitali,  
 Clericus esse nequit, Canones nisi transgrediantur.

Besides the foregoing negative rules, there were others of a *positive character*, prescribing the requisite qualifications for ordination.

1. *The candidate was required to be of a certain age.* The rules by which this canonical age was determined were undoubtedly derived from the Jewish rituals. The deacons were required to be of equal age with the levites—twenty-five years. The canonical age of presbyters and bishops was the same as that of the priests of the Jews—thirty years. The Apostolical Constitutions prescribe fifty years as the canonical age of a bishop. This was afterward reduced to thirty. In some instances, persons were introduced into the ministry at an age still earlier.<sup>11</sup> Both Siricius and Zosimus required thirty years for a deacon, thirty-five for a presbyter, and forty-five for a bishop.<sup>12</sup>

The age at which our Lord entered upon his ministry is frequently alleged as a reason for requiring the same age in a presbyter and bishop. That was usually the lowest canonical age.<sup>13</sup>

Children were sometimes appointed readers. The age of subdeacons, acolyths, and other inferior officers, was established at different times, at fifteen, eighteen, twenty, and twenty-five years.

2. *They were subject to a strict examination previous to ordination.* This examination related to their faith, their morals, and their worldly condition. They were especially subjected to the severest scrutiny in regard to the first particular. It was the duty of the bishop and subordinate officers of the clergy to conduct, for the most part, the examination; but it was held in public, and the people also took a part in it in the early periods of the hierarchy. No one would be duly ordained without the concurrence of the people in this examination, and the united approbation both of them and the bishop.\* Cyprian also insists upon the concurrence of the people in the selection of a pastor, and offers as a reason the consideration that they were more familiarly acquainted with the life and conversation of the candidate.<sup>14</sup> The names of the candidates were published, in order that they might be subjected to a severer canvass by the people.<sup>15</sup> By a law of Justinian, the candidate was required to give a written statement of his religious faith in his own handwriting, and to take a solemn oath against simony.<sup>16</sup>

The extracts in the margin show how carefully the church observed the apostolic injunction to lay hands suddenly on no man.†

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\* Nullus clericus ordinetur non probatus vel episcoporum examine, vel populi testimonio.—*Con. Carthage*, iii., A. D. 397, c. 22.

† Qui episcopus ordinatus est, antea examinatur: si natura sit prudens, si docilis, si moribus temporatus, si vita castus, si sobrius, si semper suis negotiis vacans, [al. cavens,] si humilis, si affabilis, si misericors, si literatus, si in lege Domini instructus, si in Scripturarum sensibus cautus, si in dogmatibus ecclesiasticis exercitatus, et ante omnia, si fidei documenta verbis simplicibus afferat [asserat.] Quærendum etiam ab eo; si novi vel veteris Testamenti, id est legis et prophetarum et apostolorum, unum eundemque credat auctorem et Deum; si Diabolus non per conditionem sed per arbitrium factus sit malus.—*Cbnc. Carth.* iv. A. D. 398, c. 1. Quando episcopus ordinationes facere disponit, omnes, qui ad sacrum ministerium accedere volunt, feria quarta ante ipsam ordinationem evocandi sunt ad civitatem, unacum archipresbyteris, qui eos representare debent. Et tunc episcopus a latere suo eligere debet sacerdotes et alios prudentes viros, gnaros divinæ legis, exercitatos in ecclesiasticis sanctionibus, qui ordinandorum vitam, genus, patriam, ætatem, institutionem, locum ubi educati sunt, si sint bene literati, si instructi in lege Domini, diligenter investigent, ante omnia si fidem catholicam firmiter teneant, et verbis simplicibus asserere queant. Ipsi autem, quibus hoc committitur, cavere debent, ne aut favoris gratia, aut cujuscunque muneris cupiditate illecti a vero deviant, et indignum et minus idoneum ad sacros gradus suscipiendos episcopi manibus applicent.—*Conc. Nannetense*, A. D. 658, c. 11. Presbyterum ordinari non debet ante legitimum tempus, hoc est, ante xxx

No formal provision was made for the instruction of candidates for the sacred office in the ages immediately succeeding that of the apostles. John, and some other apostles, are supposed to have had, like our Lord, certain disciples who resorted to them as attendants and followers, and, by habitual intercourse with them, became qualified to assume the office of a teacher in the church. It is asserted by authors, though without sufficient evidence, that the church continued for several ages to be supplied in this manner with spiritual teachers. The Council of Vaison, however, in the sixth century, required the presbyters to observe this custom of our Lord, which they alleged to be common in Italy.

Christian parents and friends themselves became the instructors of their children, not only in the knowledge of the Christian religion, but in the usual branches of learning. Thus Origen was taught by his father, and Gregory of Nyssa by his sister. After the establishment of churches, schools were sustained in connection with them for the education of the children; and buildings were erected adjacent to these churches for this purpose.

The first theological school was the famous catechetical school at Alexandria; which became distinguished in the third century, and continued until the fifth. After this, sprang up other celebrated schools in different countries; as at Antioch, Cæsarea, Edissa, Nisilis, &c.

History affords no positive evidence that candidates for the ministry, at their ordination, were subjected to an examination respecting their literary qualifications and doctrinal knowledge previous to the fourth century. Even at this period there were ignorant and idle pretenders to the teachings of the Spirit, who, while they affected to despise all human attainments, aspired to assume the sacred office of the ministry. Against such enthusiasts and indolent aspirants Augustin, Jerome, Gregory Nazianzen, and Chrysostom inveigh with just severity.<sup>17</sup>

3. *No person could regularly be appointed to the higher offices of the church without having passed through the subordinate grades.* To this rule there were frequent exceptions, but the principle was strenuously maintained, in order that no one should assume the

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*ætatis annum; sed priusquam ad presbyteratus consecrationem accedat, maneat in episcopio discendi gratia officium suum tam diu, donec possint et mores et actus ejus animadverti; et tunc, si dignus fuerit, ad sacerdotium promoveatur.—*  
*Conc. Turon.* 3, A. D. 813, c. 12.

ministerial office until he had in this way become practically familiar with the whole system of ecclesiastical discipline and policy.\*<sup>18</sup>

4. *Every one was to be ordained to some special charge.*† This was supposed to be the apostolical rule. Acts xiv. 33; Tit. i. 5; 1 Pet. v. 2. Exceptions sometimes occurred, though very rarely, and always against the decided sentiments of the church. Non-resident clergy, who are in this way removed from the watch and discipline of the church, receive no favour from the ancient canons and early ecclesiastical writers.

5. *Every minister was required to remain in the diocese over which he was ordained;* and no one could, at the same time, be invested with more than one office.<sup>19</sup> Plurality of livings were unknown to the ancient church.

6. A clerical tonsure was made requisite about the fifth or sixth century. No mention is made of it before the fourth, and it is first spoken of with decided disapprobation.<sup>20</sup>

### § 3. OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE RITE.

THE duty of administering the rite devolved, *ex officio*, upon the bishop alone. This is abundantly implied in the canons of councils, and often expressly asserted by ecclesiastical writers.<sup>1</sup> Ordination by a presbyter is frequently declared to be null and void.<sup>2</sup> The office of the presbyter in the rites of ordination was to assist the bishop in ordaining a fellow-presbyter.‡

The ordination was solemnized in the church and in the presence of the assembly. Private ordinations were severely censured.<sup>3</sup>

\* Ut ex laico ad gradum sacerdotii ante nemo veniat, nisi prius in officio lectorati vel subdiaconati disciplinam ecclesiasticam discat, et sic per singulos gradus ad sacerdotium veniat.—*Conc. Bracar.* 2, A. D. 563, c. 20. Varia habenda est ordinatio quæ, nec loco fundata est nec auctoritate munita.—*Leo M. Ep.* 32, ad *Rustic.* c. 1.

† Μηδένα ἀπολελυμένως (absolute) χειροτονεῖσθαι μήτε πρεσβύτερον, μήτε διάκονον, μήτε ὧως τινὰ τῶν ἐν ἐκκλησιαστικῷ τάγματι εἰ μὴ ἰδικῶς (specialiter) ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ πόλεως, ἢ κώμης, ἢ μαρτυρίᾳ, ἢ μοναστηρίῳ ὁ χειροτονούμενος ἐπικηρύττετο. Τοὺς δὲ ἀπολύτως χειροτονουμένους ὥρισεν ἡ ἁγία σύνοδος ἄκυρον ἔχειν τὴν τοιαύτην χειροθεσίαν, καὶ μηδαμῶς δύνασθαι ἐνεργεῖν ἐφ' ὧς τοῦ χειροτονήσαντος.—*Conc. Chalced.* A. D. 451, c. 6; *Conf. Conc. Valent.* c. 6.

‡ Presbyter cum ordinatur, episcopo eum benedicente et manum super caput ejus tenente, etiam omnes presbyteri qui præsentes sunt, manus suas juxta manum episcopi super caput illius teneant.—*Conc. Carth.* iv. c. 4. Presbyteros quoque et diaconos sola manuum impositione ordinabant; sed suos presbyteros quisque episcopus cum presbyterorum collegio ordinabat. Quanquam autem idem agebant



During the first four centuries the ordination was solemnized at any season of the year, as occasion required, and on any day of the week. It afterward became a rule of the church that the ordination should be performed only on the sabbath,<sup>4</sup> sometimes in the morning, sometimes in the evening, but usually in connection with the celebration of the Lord's supper.<sup>5</sup>

Baptism was also connected not unfrequently with the administration of the rite in question. A preference was manifested for the holy days of the church in which to solemnize the ordinance, particularly on the great festival of Easter, and on the principal fast-days of the church.

Candidates for ordination were accustomed uniformly to observe a season of fasting and prayer preparatory to this ordinance,<sup>6</sup> and to receive the sacrament.

The first and most significant act in the rite of ordination was the imposition of hands. This has been from the beginning an uniform and expressive rite in the consecration of one to the service of the sacred ministry; and in this, accompanied with prayer, the act of ordination essentially consisted. By many this is supposed to differ from the common imposition of hands at baptism, confirmation, and absolution. The manner of performing the ceremony has differed at different times.

About the ninth century it became customary in the Romish church to anoint the candidate for holy orders.

In the Eastern church this custom never became general. The oil was applied to the head and hands of the bishops, but only to the hands of the presbyters.

The investiture—the custom of delivering the sacred vessels, ornaments, and vestments—was introduced in the seventh century. But some mention is made of it at an earlier date. The badges and insignia varied with different persons, according to the nature of their office.

In the ordination of a bishop, an open Bible was laid upon his head—sometimes delivered into his hands—to indicate that he was continually to consult this for direction in duty. A ring was put upon his finger as a token of his espousal to the church, and a staff in his hand as the shepherd of the flock. The mitre was added in

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omnes, quia tamen præibat episcopus et quasi ejus auspiciis res gerebatur, ideo ipsius dicebatur ordinatio. Unde veteres hoc sæpe habent, non differre alia re ab episcopo presbyterum, nisi quia ordinandi potestatem non habeat.—CALVIN, *Instit. Rel. Chr.* lib. iv. c. 4, § 15.



the tenth century, and the glove was also introduced, but at what time does not appear.

The presbyter received the sacramental cup and plate in token of his service in administering the sacrament.

Upon the deacon the bishop laid his right hand and delivered to him a copy of the Gospels, to indicate that he was to act as the agent and organ of the bishop.

The subdeacon received an empty paten and cup, with an ewer and napkin; the reader received a copy of the Scriptures; the acolyth, a candlestick with a taper; and the ostiarii the keys of the church.

The person ordained was signed with the sign of the cross, and after his ordination received the kiss of charity from the ordaining minister and his assistants.<sup>7</sup>

The following is the prayer which is prescribed by the Apostolical Constitutions to be used in the ordination of a bishop:—

“O eternal and almighty Lord God, the only unbegotten and supreme, who art from eternity, before all time and all things; thou who hast need of nothing, and art exalted far above all circumstances and events; thou who art the only true, the only wise, the highest over all; whose nature is inscrutable, and whose knowledge is without beginning; thou who alone art good, and with whom no one may compare; thou who knowest all things before they come to pass; thou from whom no secrets are hid, whom no one can approach unto, whom no one can command; O thou God and Father of thine only-begotten Son, our Lord and Saviour; thou who through time hast created all things, and who upholdest all; thou father of mercy, and God of all consolation; thou who dwellest in the highest, and regardest the things that are below; thou who hast given to the church its bounds by the incarnation of thy Christ, with the testimony of the Comforter, by thine apostles, and by the bishops here present by thy grace; thou who from the beginning, amongst the first men, didst for the good of thy people appoint priests, even Abel, Seth, Enos, Enoch, Noah, Melchizedek, and Job;—thou who didst choose thy faithful servants Abraham and the other patriarchs, Moses, Aaron, Eleazar, and Phineas, and didst appoint from among them princes and priests for the service of the covenant; who didst make Samuel both priest and prophet, who didst not leave thy sanctuary without ministers and attendance, and didst show favour unto those whom thou didst cause to minister to thy glory;—we beseech thee to pour out now through us, by the

mediation of thy Christ, the power of thine almighty Spirit, which is given through thy beloved Son Jesus Christ, and which he imparted to thine holy apostles according to thy will, O eternal God. Grant, O thou searcher of the heart, that this thy servant, whom thou hast chosen to the office of a bishop, may feed thy holy flock in thy name, and may serve thee unblamably as thine high priest, day and night; and that he, propitiating thy countenance, may gather unto thee the number of those who shall be called, and may present the offerings of thy holy church. Grant unto him, O Lord Almighty, by thy Christ and the communication of the Holy Spirit, that he may have power to remit sins according to thy commandment, to confer orders (*διδόναι κλήρους*) according to thy appointment, and to loose every bond (*πάντα σύνδεσμον*) according to the power which thou didst grant unto thine apostles. Grant that he may please thee by meekness, purity of heart, constancy, sincerity, and a blameless conversation; that so he may offer unto thee the pure and unbloody sacrifice which thou hast appointed by Christ in the sacrament of the new covenant, and as the offering of a sweet-smelling savour, through thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, our God and Saviour, through whom be unto thee glory, honour, and adoration, in the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen."

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## CHAPTER XII. //

### OF CLERICAL PREROGATIVES.

#### § 1. OF THE RANK OF THE CLERGY.

THE pride of rank was wholly unknown in the age of the apostles and of their immediate successors; and, indeed, until the establishment of Christianity as a state religion under Constantine. The ministerial office neither conferred any personal superiority nor claimed any official distinction. The representations which the Scriptures and the primitive fathers so frequently make of the dignity and worth of religious teachers have no reference to this subject. They only represent these teachers as the servants and stewards of God, and their office as one in the highest degree elevated and heavenly. Such, indeed, was the real estimation in which some of the most eminent Christian bishops were held by the world in the first three centuries, that one might fitly say of them—the greatest in the kingdom of heaven was the least of all men.

The famous Origen was, in regard to rank, one of the *lesser lights* in the church, invested at first with only the humble office of *catechist*, and afterward, informally, with that of *deacon*, or, according to some, with that of *presbyter*. Yet had he more influence and authority than any dignitary of the church in his time. Clemens Alexandrinus and Tertullian were never bishops; but they were held in the highest estimation both by their contemporaries and by posterity. Jerome was only an itinerating *presbyter*, but he was honoured as the dictator of the church. And still later, even when the aristocracy of the church was fully established, there occurred, at times, instances of men who, by their talents, rose superior to all the distinctions of rank and of office. On the other hand, even the bishops of Rome, Antioch, Alexandria, Carthage, and others, notwithstanding their high office, were often treated with the greatest indignity.

The relations of rank must have existed among the priesthood *themselves* previous to the time of Constantine, even from the time when they began to be regarded as a distinct order, and to be divided into different classes, *superior* and *inferior*. But it was a long time before even these relations became so distinct as they have been since the establishment of the Eastern and Western hierarchy in the eighth century. After the organization of the episcopal government, however, as a religious establishment, a long and bitter strife began between the different orders for preferment and distinction one above another. The primitive presbyters sustained an arduous conflict, first against the pretensions of bishops to superiority; and then again against the order of deacons, and especially of the *archdeacons*, who arrayed themselves on the side of the bishops. The result of this increasing conflict was the final subjugation of the presbyters to the authority of the bishops, so that only a few ventured occasionally to remonstrate against the usurpation of the episcopate. And the bishops again sustained a struggle, arduous and disastrous to themselves, with the archbishops, primates, and patriarchs. With the latter, particularly, a long and obstinate strife for the mastery was maintained, which finally resulted in the popish supremacy; but the conflict ceased not so long as one remained to sustain it.

Previous to the reign of Constantine no outward relations of rank were established among the clergy. But as in both the Jewish and Roman states the priesthood were invested with peculiar honours, so this monarch sought to transfer the same to the Christian ministry. Thus these forms of the Jewish priesthood perpetuated themselves in the Christian church after the overthrow of the religion to which they at first belonged.<sup>1</sup>

The bishops, especially, profited by this reference to the priesthood of Jewish and pagan systems of religion, claiming that the Christian bishops ought at least to be equal in rank to the Jewish patriarchs.<sup>2</sup> It was an expedient to elevate a depressed priesthood by investing them with new honours, just as Julian the Apostate sought afterward to overthrow them by reinstating the pagan priesthood in their ancient rank.<sup>3</sup> And again, Constantine himself sustained a certain relation to the priesthood. Eusebius declares him to have been a bishop duly constituted by God.<sup>4</sup> And he styles himself bishop, *τῶν ἐκτὸς ὑπὸ θεοῦ καθεστάμενον ἐπίσκοπον*—a phrase of similar import with *pontifex maximus*, which, after the example of the Roman emperors, he solemnly assumed in the year

325.<sup>5</sup> The Emperor Gratian, † 383, was the last who bore this title. But so long as it was retained it had the effect to elevate the office both of bishops and emperors in the estimation of the people, and to justify the intervention of secular power in ecclesiastical councils and in the elections of bishops.

The priesthood of the Christian church, after its union with the state, in the fourth century, were the constituted guardians of the morals of the community, as civil as well as ecclesiastical magistrates, and in this relation had a decided superiority to the pagan and Jewish priesthood. Even the highest magistrates and princes were not exempt from their sentences of suspension and excommunication. Theodosius the Great submitted himself to this discipline, A. D. 390, and his example was imitated by many of his successors, down to the time of Henry IV.<sup>6</sup> Gregory Nazianzen, in speaking on this subject, says, "The law of Christ subjects you to my control. For we also are in authority, and I will add, an authority greater and more perfect than yours, inasmuch as the carnal is inferior to the spiritual—the earthly to the heavenly."<sup>7</sup> Multitudes of passages of similar import are found in the writings of Chrysostom,<sup>8</sup> Ambrose,<sup>9</sup> and other of the fathers.<sup>10</sup>

Notwithstanding the high consideration in which the clergy were held, we are still left in ignorance of their relative rank in civil life. But on the re-establishment of the Western empire, their civil and political relations were clearly defined; and under the dynasty of Charlemagne, in the eighth century, the bishops obtained the rank of barons or lords, and as such became civil magistrates and counsellors in the state, and, as civil dignitaries, took part in all political and ecclesiastical concerns of importance. They were regular members of all *imperial diets*, which were in reality ecclesiastical synods. At a later period, bishops, archbishops, and abbots were, by statute laws, made princes of the empire and electors. And the last mentioned were often involved in conflicts with the Roman cardinals for superiority. This organization was continued until the dissolution of the German confederacy subsequent to the French Revolution, and became a pattern for other lands.

## § 2. OF THE IMMUNITIES, PREROGATIVES, AND PRIVILEGES OF THE PRIESTHOOD.

PREVIOUS to his conversion, Constantine merely gave to the clergy of the Christian church equal privileges with the pagan and



Jewish priests. These acts of toleration were followed by others conferring upon the clergy of the church certain specific privileges, which were confirmed and increased by his sons. And what was lost by the intervention of Julian the Apostate was fully regained under the propitious reigns of Valentinian III., Gratian, Theodosius the Great, Honorius, etc. For a full account of the several grants of the early emperors, see references.<sup>1</sup>

The principal rights and privileges of the priesthood were as follows:—

1. *Exemption from all civil offices and secular duties to the state.*<sup>2</sup> Such exemption was granted by Constantine, A. D. 312; and in 319 and 330, it was extended to the inferior order, and the reason assigned for conferring this privilege was, that “the clergy might not, for any unworthy pretence, be called off from their religious duties,” *ne sacrilego livore quorundam a divinis obsequiis avocentur*, or, as Eusebius expresses it, “that they might have no false pretence or excuse for being diverted from their sacred calling, but rather might rightfully prosecute it without molestation.” By this right they were excused from bearing burdensome and expensive municipal offices. The Jewish patriarchs and pagan priests enjoyed a similar exemption.<sup>3</sup>

2. *Exemption from all sordid offices, both predial and personal.* This right was also granted by Constantine and confirmed by Theodosius the Great and Honorius.<sup>4</sup> The right relieved them from the necessity of furnishing post-horses, provisions, etc., for public officers, and sometimes from that of constructing and repairing public highways and bridges.<sup>5</sup>

3. *Exemption from certain taxes and imposts.* The clergy were not, indeed, totally exempt from taxation. Their property, real and personal, was taxed, but this exemption has reference to certain other assessments, such as (a) the *census capitum*—analogous to poll-tax; but the learned are not agreed respecting the precise nature of it. (b) The *aurum tironium*—an assessment for military purposes, a bounty paid as a substitute for serving in the army. (c) The *equus canonicus*, the furnishing and equipping of horses for military service. (d) *Chrysargyrum*, χρυσάργυρον, commerce-money, duties on articles of trade assessed every five years, and paid in silver and gold. (e) The *metatum*, a tax levied for the entertainment of the emperor and his court as he travelled, or for judges and soldiers in their journeys. (f) The *collatio superindicta*

*et extraordinaria*, a direct tax levied on special emergencies.<sup>6</sup> Certain taxes on real estate they were required to pay.<sup>7</sup>

4. *Exemption from military duty.* This right is not expressly stated, but fairly inferred from many considerations. The maxim, *ecclesia non sitit sanguinem*, was always recognised by the state.

5. *Exemption in certain civil and criminal prosecutions.* They were not required to appear in court, nor to give testimony under oath.<sup>8</sup> Neither were they required to make oath to affidavits, but instead thereof, they attested the truth of their testimony on the Bible at home.<sup>9</sup> *Sacerdotes, ex levi causa, jurare non debent.* This was a concession to the dignity of the bishop; but presbyters were summoned to appear in court to give testimony. The more the bishops exalted themselves above the presbyters, the more were the latter subject to indignities from their superiors. In this instance external influence from the state was so employed as to exhibit the presbyter in humiliating contrast with the bishop.

The rank, immunities, and privileges of the clergy, especially those of the bishops, were powerful incentives to bad men to aspire after ecclesiastical offices, and equally efficacious in corrupting the ministry. Taxation and war, under a despotic government, impose grievous burdens on the people, from which multitudes would gladly escape by entering into clerical orders.

The spirit of Christians at this time, in contrast with that of primitive Christians, is forcibly exhibited by Sulpicius Severus, † A. D. 420, who says, "that then a glorious martyrdom was sought more eagerly than now men with depraved ambition aspire to a bishopric."<sup>10</sup>

6. *No ecclesiastical matters were to be tried before secular courts.*<sup>11</sup> Of this nature were all questions of faith and practice, which came appropriately under the cognizance of presbyteries, bishops, or synods, together with all such acts of discipline as belonged to individual churches, in which the clergy were allowed a controlling influence.

The primitive church had originally no other authority than that of deposing from office, excommunicating, and pronouncing their solemn anathema. But after the church became dependent upon the civil authority, that power was often exercised to redress the offences of the church. Heretics especially were thus brought before courts of justice. For it is undeniably evident that heresy was regarded as an actionable offence, deserving severe punishment. Offences of a graver character were at all times punishable, not in ecclesiastical, but in secular courts of justice.

7. Bishops, like the Jewish patriarchs, were often requested to settle disputes and act as arbitrators and umpires in civil matters.<sup>12</sup> They were also common intercessors in behalf of criminals for their reprieve or pardon when condemned to death.<sup>13</sup>

### § 3. OF CLERICAL LETTERS.

THE generous hospitality of the primitive Christians, of which mention has been made, was so frequently abused by impostors, that it became necessary at an early period, to give to all Christians who travelled beyond the range of their acquaintance, testimonials of their character, commending them to the confidence and fellowship of Christian brethren wherever they might travel. As synodical councils began to be held, they gave occasion for the frequent exchange of letters. Soon after the establishment of the episcopate, the bishops were accustomed to communicate to other dioceses their own acts of discipline, and, to give more effect to their discipline, none was allowed to reverse the bans or remove the censure but he with whom the sentence originated. None of the subordinate clergy could officiate in another church unless duly accredited by the testimonials of his bishop. These regulations gave occasion for frequent missives from the bishops. Whatever was the nature of these official communications, they were uniformly sent from diocese to diocese by special messengers, and usually by the hands of the subdeacons, as the trusty agents of the bishop. This, indeed, was for some time the most responsible duty of the subdeacons. Cyprian, on one occasion, ordained a new subdeacon to take charge of his letters to Rome, because those in office could not be spared for this service.<sup>1</sup>

These regulations invested the bishop again with dangerous prerogatives; they placed "the power of the keys" in his hands, to open and shut at his pleasure or caprice the church of Christ, so that the character of every communicant and the privileges of communion and fellowship were at the disposal of the bishop. Banishment or removal offered no relief to one, however unjustly he might be under censure. Without the testimonial of his bishop, the church of Christ was barred against him abroad as well as at home, for none but the bishop was allowed, on any occasion, to issue letters missive of any character from one church to another—a prerogative the power of which the bishops well understood and guarded with peculiar jealousy.

These clerical letters were known by different names, according to the various occasions on which they were written. They were styled, in general, *literæ formatae*, γράμματα τετυπωμένα, with such qualifications as the following: κανονικά, κοινωνικά, εἰρηνικά, συστατικά, ἀπολυτικά, ἐνδρονιστικά, *communicatoriæ*, *pacificæ*, *dimissoriæ*, etc. The explanation of the character of these letters is given in the words of Bingham :

“They are generally of three kinds, the *epistolæ commendatoriæ*, *communicatoriæ*, and *dimissoriæ*. The first were such as were granted only to persons of quality, or else persons whose reputation had been called in question, or to the clergy who had occasion to travel into foreign countries. The second sort were granted to all who were in the peace and communion of the church; whence they were also called *pacificæ*, and *ecclesiasticæ*, and sometimes *canonicæ*. The third sort were such as were only given to the clergy, when they were to remove from their own diocese and settle in another; and they were to testify that they had their bishop's leave to depart; whence they were called *dimissoriæ*, and sometimes *pacificæ* likewise. All these went under the general name of *formatae*, because they were written in a peculiar form, with some particular marks and characters, which served as special signatures to distinguish them from counterfeits. By all ancient canons this privilege is reserved entirely to bishops, and this set their authority very high in the church, for no one, either clergy or laity, could communicate in any church besides his own without these testimonials from his bishop; as may be seen in the Councils of Carthage,<sup>2</sup> and Agde,<sup>3</sup> and many others.”

#### § 4. OF CLERICAL COSTUMES.

IN a religion like that of the Old Testament, which estimates every thing relating to the kingdom of God by outward forms, and relies for its effect chiefly upon specific external rites, the high-priest of its awful mysteries might be expected to appear before the people in imposing clerical vestments. But such a vestiture is incompatible with the simplicity and spirituality of Christian worship. Nothing is known of official vestments either in the New Testament or in the earliest writings of the fathers. There are, indeed, traditions of the linen robe of James; of the golden frontlets of Mark, and James, and John; and of the splendid mantle of Bartholomew;<sup>1</sup> but these are regarded as unworthy of credit. No



authentic notice of any clerical vestments appears on the page of ancient history earlier than the fourth century. They were assumed as a part of the imposing forms of episcopal worship, on the substitution of these for the simplicity of primitive worship. Constantine, in the fourth century, presented a splendid robe, inwrought with gold, to the bishop of Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup> And many distinguished Roman Catholic writers, together with most of the Protestant authors who have treated on this subject, concur in assigning to this century the origin of the custom of investing the clergy with an official costume. The bishops of the Eastern church were the first to adopt these badges of office, of which the principal was the robe *ᾠμοφόριον*.

This episcopal badge, denominated *pallium super humerale, pectorale*, is supposed to have been introduced into the Western church at a later period. The Roman Catholic writer, Pellicia, affirms that the clergy were not distinguished from the laity in their dress until the sixth century.<sup>3</sup> But the Council of Arles, A. D. 314, c. 23, and the Council of Carthage, A. D. 398, c. 41, passed decrees respecting some of the inferior orders of the clergy, from which it appears that, in the churches of Africa and Gaul, the clergy had assumed, in the fourth century, a distinctive habit. On the contrary, there is extant an epistle from Cælestin, bishop of Rome, A. D. 428, addressed to the bishops of Vienna and Narbonne, in which he complains that certain priests in the church of Gaul had begun to distinguish themselves from the laity by wearing the robe and girdle. To this custom he strongly objects as a dangerous innovation, which may be the occasion of introducing vain superstitions.\* These objections, however, are supposed by many, to have been urged by Cælestin against change of the bishop's robe for the garb of a monk.

The robe was originally a white woollen fabric, hanging loosely from the shoulders.<sup>4</sup> Durandus describes it, at a later period, as changed, like every thing else, from its original simplicity, and decked out with many superstitious, fantastic ornaments, to which mysterious meanings were attached. It was made of the fleece of the sheep, because that animal is an emblem of harmless innocence. It was gathered into a circle upon the shoulders, emblematical of

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\* Discernendi a plebe sumus doctrina, non veste; conversatione, non habitu; mentis puritate, non cultu. Si incipimus studere novitati, traditum nobis a patribus ordinem calcabimus, ut locum supervacuis superstitionibus faceamus.—*Ep. 2, ad Gall. c. 1.*



the fear of God which restrains us within appointed bounds. It had *two stripes*, in front and on the back, significant of an active and a contemplative life. It had double foldings on the left, to indicate the patient endurance of the trials of this life; and a single one on the right, to express the single aspiration of the soul after the rest that remains to the people of God in heaven. It had four purple crosses; one on the breast, one on the back, and one on either side, emblematical of the four virtues—justice, fortitude, prudence, and temperance; purple, to show that these virtues must be dyed in the purple blood of the cross before they can commend us to the favour of Heaven;—and finally into this robe were inserted three golden pins.<sup>5</sup> Such were some of the puerile superstitions that encumbered the ritual of the church in the middle ages.

It appears from Socrates,<sup>6</sup> that a black robe early became a part of the clerical costume; but whether worn in public or in private is not apparent from the passage. Besides black and white colours, others, such as red, blue, green, and violet, were sometimes adopted.

The form of the robe was also varied at times, according to which it received different names, as *ovarium*, *sudarium*, *dalmatica alba*, *στολή*, *περιβόλαιον*, &c.

The principle ornament for the head was the *tiara* or *mitre*. This was a species of turban, similar to the antique mitre or crown of ancient kings; and, like that, was a symbol of power and authority. Gregory Nazianzen, in the fourth century, speaks of it under the name of *cidaris*.<sup>\*</sup> But we have not satisfactory evidence of the use of it until a later period. John of Cappadocia, who lived in the sixth century, is represented to have had a crown embellished with gold and precious stones.

After the sixth century, *the ring* and *the staff* became also badges of the bishop, to which, as usual, mysterious meanings were attached. The latter, especially, was forked at the bottom, and wrought into fantastic shapes, for which the most whimsical reasons were assigned by the superstition of the age.

*Chirothecæ*, *gloves*, as a part of the costume of the bishop, are mentioned as early as the fifth and sixth century; for the use of which, reasons are assigned, drawn from Matt. vi. 1-4.

We have yet to add to the equipment of the bishop his *boots* and his *sandals*, *caligæ* and *sandalia*; to which also a mystical meaning was attached.

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\* Capitique cidarem imponis.

Augusti refers the origin of a clerical costume back to a higher antiquity than the fourth century, in which opinion he is followed by many others. In support of his opinion, he appeals to the origin of Christianity as only a modification of Judaism. The minister, therefore, of the new religion, may be presumed to retain some clerical vestments similar to those of the high-priest. But in reply it is urged, that there is not in the New Testament the least indication of any clerical costume; neither were the rites of the church derived from the temple-service, but from that of the synagogue, where no sacrificial rites were performed nor clerical offices required.

He further cites some equivocal traditions respecting certain vestments, and ornaments or badges, of some of the apostles. These traditions, however, even if true, do not necessarily imply that they were any part of a clerical costume.

Augusti also supposes that such a costume would be a natural, if not an indispensable part of the imposing rites of the secret discipline of the church; but this discipline can hardly claim a higher antiquity than the fourth century. For the same reason, all that relates to the costume of the candidates for baptism, as taught by Cyril in his catechism, and prescribed in the Apostolical Constitutions, is to be rejected as of no higher antiquity than the fourth or fifth century. And even Augusti admits that "the most ancient history knows nothing of any peculiar costume, either for him that administers or those that receive baptism."

Indeed, ancient history makes no intimation of any clerical costume previous to the fourth century. Constantine presented Macarius, bishop of Jerusalem, a sacred robe, *ἱεράν στολήν*, to be worn in the administration of the ordinance; and toward the latter part of this century the bishops began to discuss the propriety of different colours for their robes.<sup>7</sup>

The fourth Council of Carthage, A. D. 399, has an ordinance, c. 44, respecting the tonsure of the clergy, and another on the use of the white surplice by the deacons.

These appear to be the earliest indications of an official clerical dress both in the Eastern and Western churches. A clerical costume is a fiction of the hierarchy, a desire to magnify the office of the priesthood, to separate them from the laity, and to give effect to the ceremonials of religious worship.

Peculiar attention was paid to the head-dress both of bishops and priests. The clerical tonsure was introduced between the sixth and

eighth centuries, and continued an essential requisite of the clergy, while the other ornaments of the head were endlessly varied, both in the Eastern and Western churches. The use of the *wig* is of a date still later, and was totally unknown in the primitive church. It was universally adopted by the clergy, against all precedent, and, although often prohibited, was for a long time retained, and then again passed into disuse. In the Protestant church it was again introduced in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and became alternately the badge of orthodoxy, heresy, and neology.

#### § 5. OF THE REVENUE OF THE CLERGY.

NOTHING like the provisions of the levitical law, for the maintenance of the priesthood, was known in the primitive church. Neither was there any distinction between the property of the church and of the parish. The duty of the church to maintain her religious teachers is presupposed, however, and implied in the writings of the New Testament. "The workman is worthy of his meat," says Christ, to which the apostle appeals. Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live by the gospel, 1 Cor. ix. 14; which the apostle had previously shown to be not only an obvious conclusion from the words of Christ, but from the common understanding of men, and from the Mosaic laws, vs. 7-13. All this he is careful to show is said, not for his own sake, vs. 15-18, for he uniformly preached the gospel and served the church gratuitously,—Acts xx. 33-35; 2 Thess. iii. 7 *et seq.*; 2 Cor. xi. 7, 8; xii. 13; Phil. iv. 16-18; 1 Tim. vi. 7; Tit. i. 11; Acts xviii. 3; xxiv. 17, etc.,—but to exhibit the duty of the church toward her teachers. The example of the apostle was the general rule of the apostolic age. The church possessed no property, and exacted no tithes; but her wants were supplied by voluntary offerings and contributions.

The ordinary maintenance of the clergy consisted merely in the supply of their personal wants. 2 Thess. iii. 8; 1 Cor. xi. 20; xxii. 33; Jude xi. 12. For this end the clergy were accustomed to retain a due portion of the contributions which were made at the *agapæ*, or love-feasts of the church. But Tertullian severely censured this custom, together with other abuses connected with this festival.<sup>1</sup>

Whatever was given for the relief of the poor, and for the support of religious worship, was altogether voluntary on the part of

the church. Acts xi. 29; Rom. xv. 26; 1 Cor. xvi. 1 *et seq.* Tertullian particularly informs us that they were accustomed once a month, or at any time, to deposit in a *charity box* whatever any one was able and willing to give, and adds, "No one is compelled; it is a voluntary offering."<sup>2</sup> Justin Martyr also makes mention of monthly offerings, which, however, were chiefly applied to supply the wants of the needy. These charities were expended in providing for the support and burial of the poor; of orphans, of aged domestics, of the disabled and infirm; and for the brethren in bonds. It is worthy of remark, that in all this no mention is made of the clergy as a distinct class; but they are included among the aged and the poor.

In addition to the monthly contributions already mentioned, it was customary to take up collections at the celebration of the love-feasts, and of the Lord's supper. These were celebrated every Sabbath, and, at times, even daily.

The payment of *tithes* to the church became customary, also, as early as the third century. Such voluntary contributions were encouraged by the clergy,\* and, finally, in the sixth century were required by specific decrees of synods.

Special contributions were often made for charitable objects, and for the clergy themselves.

The resources of the church for the maintenance of the clergy, and for all charitable purposes, were wholly contributed on the voluntary principle; and when at length specific provision was made for the support of the clergy and of religious worship, it was not by any ordinance of the church, but by the law of the state, after the union of church and state in the fourth century. This *disbursement* of the revenues of the church is frequently the subject of remark in the history of the times;<sup>3</sup> but no law or ordinance of the church appears coercing an involuntary contribution or tax to sustain these revenues. Fees paid to the clergy for services rendered, were called *sportæ*, *sportellæ*, and *sportulæ*; probably in allusion to the bringing of the first fruits in a basket, *sportula*.<sup>4</sup> Deut. xxvi. 1-12. They surely were not the same as the *jura stolæ*, fees for ministerial services, which were totally unknown in the primitive church. It was an established rule that no fees should be received for religious services. The Council of Illibiris, A. D.

\* *Majores nostri ideo copiis omnibus abundant, quia Deo decimas dabant et Cæsari censum reddebant.*—*August. Homi.* 48. *Comp. Conc. Matic.* c. 5; *Conc. Turon.*

305, c. 48, forbade the custom of dropping a piece of money into the baptismal basin as a gratuity to the minister for administering the ordinance.<sup>5</sup> Another strictly prohibited the receiving of any thing from communicants at the Lord's table, alleging that the grace of God was not an article of merchandise, neither was the sanctification of the spirit imparted for money.<sup>6</sup> Neither was it lawful to receive any fee for performing the burial service.<sup>7</sup>

The first departure from the voluntary principle above mentioned began with the celebration of religious ordinances *in a private manner*, in which the individual, at whose request this private celebration was performed, was required to pay something as an equivalent for the public and voluntary oblations which would otherwise have been made. For the sake of increasing the treasury of the church, a dispensation of the primitive usage was also introduced in the case of penance, which shortly led on to a wider departure from the rules of the church. Still when the payment of surrogate and surplice fees became common, they were not paid to the officiating priest, but into the public treasury of the church. The payment of fees and perquisites, as now practised, is an abuse of later date than the above mentioned, which, like the penance-fees so often and so justly censured, still has found supporters even in the Protestant churches of Europe.<sup>8</sup>

So far as the clergy of the primitive church can be said to have had any salary, it was paid, either according to their necessities, or according to some general rule, from the treasury of the church, or of the society. The treasury was supplied only from incidental sources, and chiefly from voluntary contributions. The amount paid to servants of the church, and for the poor, must have been more or less, according to the receipts of the treasury. The revenue of the church was submitted to the direction of the bishops, who employed the deacons and the *oeconomi*, or stewards, to disburse it.

Various rules were from time to time given for the distribution of funds.<sup>9</sup> One required that they should be divided into *three* equal parts, one of which was to be paid to the bishops, another to the clergy, and the third was to be expended in making repairs and providing lights for the house, etc.<sup>10</sup> Another orders a fourfold division, to be equally appropriated to the bishop, the clergy, and the poor, and in repairs of the churches and their furniture.<sup>11</sup>

These regulations were, for the most part, of a later date, and were established chiefly to restrain the avarice of the bishops, and



to correct abuses resulting from their control of the revenues of the church.

In the fourth century the church and the clergy came into the possession of property, personal and real. As early as the year 321, Constantine granted the right of receiving the donations and bequests of pious persons.<sup>12</sup> This right was often renewed and defined, to prevent unjust exaction and other abuses. According to Eusebius, he granted at one time more than seventy thousand dollars from his treasury for the support of the ministry in Africa; which is only one instance among many of his liberal donations.<sup>13</sup> The laws of Julian, confiscating this property, were themselves either quickly abrogated or but partially enforced, without producing any lasting effect.<sup>14</sup>

The liberality of Gratian, Theodosius the Great, Theodosius the Younger, and other emperors, we must pass in silence; but there were certain ordinances for enriching the revenue of the church which are worthy of notice.

1. On the demolition of heathen temples and the dispersion of their priests by Theodosius and his sons, some of the spoils were secularized to enrich the treasury of the state; but the greater part were applied to the benefit of the clergy, or appropriated to religious uses.<sup>15</sup>

2. On the same principle the property belonging to *heretics* was sequestrated to the true Catholic church.<sup>16</sup>

3. The estates of the clergy who died intestate and without heirs, and of all those who left the ministry for unworthy reasons, became the property of the church.<sup>17</sup>

4. The church was the heir at law of all martyrs and confessors who died without near relations.<sup>18</sup>

The church, A. D. 321, as stated above, was authorized by state law to receive bequests from any who might be disposed to make legacies to it. This was a powerful incentive to the clergy to secure the inheritance of widows and orphans, and all who could, by any means, be induced to bestow their property upon the church, so that, according to Planck, it became customary "within ten years, for every one at his death to leave a legacy to the church; and within fifty years a tenth part of the entire wealth of the country passed into the hands of the clergy."<sup>19</sup>

5. The revenue of the church was increased by *tithes* and *first fruits*. The primitive church might be expected to have introduced this ordinance of the Jews from the beginning. But it was wholly

unknown until the fourth and fifth century. Irenæus, indeed, speaks of *first fruits* at an earlier period,<sup>20</sup> but it is a disputed passage,<sup>21</sup> and only relates to the wine and the bread of the eucharist, as the *first fruits of Christ*. Basil, A. D. 370, appears to have been the first to urge the payment of tithes.<sup>22</sup> Chrysostom,<sup>23</sup> Gregory Nazianzen,<sup>24</sup> Hilary,<sup>25</sup> Augustin,<sup>26</sup> and others, all enjoin the paying of tithes *as a duty*, and not in imitation of the Jews. These tithes and first fruits the Christians gave as a free-will offering, and not by constraint of law, of which there appears no indication in the first five centuries. The Council of Maçon, in the year 585, ordered the payment of tithes *in the church*, as the restoration of an ancient and venerable custom. They directed the clergy to urge the duty in their public addresses, and threatened with excision from the church all who should refuse compliance.<sup>27</sup> This, it will be observed, is merely an *ecclesiastical* law. No mention is made of any enactment of the state.

Charlemagne first required the payment of tithes by statute law, and enforced the duty by severe penalties.<sup>28</sup> That emperor himself paid tithes from his private property and his Saxon possessions. His successors confirmed and completed the system of tithes by law, which was subsequently introduced into England and Sweden.<sup>29</sup>

In the Eastern church the support of religion was never legally enforced, but it was urged as a religious duty, and tithes were paid as a voluntary offering.<sup>30</sup> In the Western, under the general name of *offerings*, the ancient system of contributions and almsgivings was perpetuated in connection with the tithes and first fruits. These offerings were made, in some instances, in money; in others, in provisions and in live stock, in cattle, swine, lambs, geese, fowls, etc. The avails of these were applied to the treasury of the church, or presented particularly to the parson, vicar, chorister, or warden. Similar offerings are still common in the Protestant churches.

The payment of a stipulated salary to the clergy, in money, parsonages, tithes, interest, and other rents, and the distribution of regular salaries and occasional perquisites, is an institution of the Middle Ages, and too extensive and complicated to be discussed in this place.

#### § 6. OF THE INDEPENDENCE AND THE DEGENERACY OF THE BISHOPS.

FEW regulations of the church were more injurious to the peace and purity of the church than those which have been detailed above;

none, perhaps, intrusted the bishops with more dangerous and disastrous rights. The bishop was made the sole, the absolute, and irresponsible retainer and disburser of the funds of the church. "We command that the bishop have power over the goods of the church; for if he be intrusted with the precious souls, much more ought he to give directions about goods." Such is the unlimited power which the Apostolical Canons, c. 41, give to the bishop over the revenues of the church. The deacons were forbidden even to give any thing in charity without the special permission of the bishop, because, if they give "to a person in distress without the bishop's knowledge, they will give it so that it must tend to the reproach of the bishop, and will accuse him as careless of the distressed."<sup>1</sup> This prerogative of the bishop is guarded with peculiar jealousy, and affirmed by repeated decrees of councils.

This placed the subordinate orders of the clergy in humiliating dependence upon the bishop for their daily bread, and made them of necessity his sycophants and subservient agents. Cyprian seems to have been the first to claim for the bishops this right over the property of the church; and the resistance of this unjust authority was one principal cause of the rupture between him and Felicissimus, the latter objecting to this independent control of the public treasury.

It is, indeed, the effectual overthrow of the first principles of civil and religious liberty, and the grand expedient of all despotisms, spiritual and secular, to take away from the people the control of their own public funds, and submit them to the arbitrary control of irresponsible agents.

As illustrative of the natural abuse of this power, Schöne mentions a bishop, who, for four years in succession, retained all the income of the diocese, without any distribution to the clergy or to the poor.<sup>2</sup>

Another result was the enormous increase of the wealth of the clergy, as already indicated. "Behold, our treasury is exhausted," says the king of France, in the last half of the sixth century. "Our wealth has passed over into the churches. No one prospers but the bishops; our dignity is lost, having been transferred to the bishops."<sup>3</sup> As a natural consequence, the ministry was soon crowded with unworthy and corrupt men, an evil which the civil authorities vainly sought by various expedients to correct.

Make the ministry the passport to honour and to wealth, and corrupt men, from such sordid motives, will pass into it. The de-

generacy of the ministry was but the legitimate fruit of the foregoing regulations, notwithstanding the precautions used by the ordinances of the church to guard it against the intrusion of unworthy men.

It was an established principle, under the Christian emperors, that temporal authority was subordinate to the spiritual; that all ecclesiastical causes should not be tried in civil, but only in an ecclesiastical court;\* and that from this decision of the bishop there should be no appeal to any civil court of justice; so that a bishop for any offence could only be tried by bishops or synods. In addition to all this, the œcumenical council at Constantinople, A. D. 381, c. 6, hedged about an action against a bishop with so many conditions as to make it extremely difficult to bring a charge against a bishop for any offence whatever. These conditions gave the bishop almost an immunity from censure in any case, insomuch that Jerome, with great justice complains—"It is no easy matter to bring a charge against a bishop, for even if he is guilty, the charge will not be believed; neither if convicted, will he be punished."<sup>4</sup>

Callistus of Rome, even as early as A. D. 220, asserted that a bishop could never be deposed by the presbytery, or obliged to abdicate, even though he committed a sin unto death—so early did the bishops of Rome claim for themselves the judicial power and the government of the church.† He also claimed the power of plenary indulgence and the forgiveness of sins; and this indulgence he actually exercised toward the grossest sensuality.

Herein lies an explanation of the rapid and sad declension of Christianity that succeeded the age of Constantine. Priestly dignity and power had usurped the authority of the church: it had raised the government above the church of Christ, invested with Divine authority, as a vast oppressive machinery, to govern them without their control or direction. The priesthood had absorbed a large portion of the wealth of the people, and the corruption and degradation into which priest and people mutually sank for more than a thousand years, was but the natural consequence of this spiritual despotism.

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\* Quoties de religione agitur episcopus convenit judicare.—*Codex Theodos.* lib. i. tit. xi. 1; *Comp. lib.* xvi. tit. ii. 23.

† Bunsen's Hippolytus, ii. p. 310.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### OF CHURCHES AND SACRED PLACES.

#### § 1. OF THE HISTORY OF CHURCHES.

CHRISTIANS in different ages have called the places where they were wont to meet together for religious worship by a great variety of names. The primitive appellation was, according to some, ἐκκλησία, 1 Cor. xi. 18, 20, 22. So it was used by Ignatius, Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian, etc. To this may be added the names of οἶκος Θεοῦ, οἶκος ἐκκλησίας, *dominicum*, *domus Dei*, etc., κυριακόν, προσευχτήριον, ναός, *templum*, etc., the Lord's house, house of the church, house of prayer, temple, etc. These names became familiar in the third and fourth centuries.

The German *kirche*, from which is derived the Scotch *kirk*, and English *church*, came into use in the eighth century. The original of the word is κυριακόν, κυριακή, the Lord's house. Churches have also been entitled μαρτύρια, in honour of the holy martyrs, and for the same reason particular churches have been called by the names of different saints and martyrs, St. Paul's, St. Peter's, etc. The following names have also, at different times, and for various reasons, been given to a Christian church:—*Tituli*, (τίτλοι,) ἀνάκτορον, πρόπαια, σκηνή, *concilia*, *conciliabula*, *conventicula*, *casæ*, σύνοδοι, μοναστήριον, κοιμητήριον, *columba*, *corpus Christi*, ναός, νῆσος, ἀποστολεῖον, προφητεῖον, and many others.

Christians, in the times of the apostles, first resorted to the temple and to the synagogues of the Jews, Acts ii. 46; v. 12; xiii. 14; xiv. 1; then, to private houses for social worship. Acts xix. 8–10; xx. 8 *et seq.*; Rom. xvi. 3–5; Col. iv. 15. Of these places of assembly they had several in the same city. In times of persecution, at a later period, they were compelled to unite in the worship of God wherever they could meet without molestation—in private houses, in the open fields, in desert and solitary places, in caves and dens of the earth.<sup>1</sup> In view of these circumstances, many have



supposed that no sacred edifices were set apart for the worship of God in the first and second centuries. But there is satisfactory evidence of the existence of such churches in the latter part of the second century,<sup>2</sup> and that the Christians were allowed to appropriate to themselves such places of worship, under the emperors, from A. D. 222 to 235,<sup>3</sup> and again from 260 to 300.<sup>4</sup> From this time, the evidence of the existence of Christian churches becomes full and complete.<sup>5</sup> Eusebius, relating the state of Christianity before that time, says, "Who could describe those vast collections of men that flocked to the religion of Christ, and those multitudes crowding in from every city, and the illustrious concourse in the houses of worship? on whose account, not content with the ancient buildings, they erected spacious churches from the foundation in all the cities."<sup>6</sup> Many were destroyed in the middle of the third century in the Decian persecution. Dioclesian directed his rage especially against them, ordering them by his edict, A. D. 303, to be razed to the earth.<sup>7</sup> Optatus mentions, that in his time, A. D. 384, there were forty or more large churches in Rome.

After the persecution of Dioclesian, under Constantine and his successors, the demolished churches were rebuilt, and such as had been closed were again opened.<sup>8</sup> Pagan temples were, in some instances, converted into Christian churches; but they were usually destroyed, as not suited for public worship.<sup>9</sup> Churches in great numbers were erected, in a style of magnificence before unknown, in Constantinople, in Jerusalem, and throughout the cities of Palestine, and solemnly dedicated to the worship of God.<sup>10</sup> This religious rite was first introduced by Constantine.<sup>11</sup>

In his zeal for building churches, Justinian I. far surpassed all others, and throughout his long reign, from A. D. 527 to 565, made this the great business of his life. But his chief care he expended in building the magnificent and colossal church of St. Sophia at Constantinople. Such was the splendour of this work, that at the consecration of it he exclaimed, *Νενίκηκά σε, Σολομών*, "I have surpassed thee, O Solomon." The perpendicular height, from the summit of the grand arch to the pavement of this edifice, was one hundred and eighty feet. Some idea of this great work may be obtained from the number of ministers and attendants who were appointed by the decree of the emperor for the service of this church. They were as follows:—Sixty presbyters, one hundred deacons, forty deaconesses, ninety subdeacons, one hundred and ten readers, twenty-five singers, one hundred doorkeepers; mak-

ing a retinue of five hundred and twenty-five ministers and attendants! The value of 40,000 pounds of silver was expended in ornamenting the altar and the parts adjacent. The entire cost was nearly \$5,000,000.<sup>12</sup>

After the death of Justinian, the zeal for building churches greatly declined, and few of any notoriety were erected from the fifth to the eighth century. The arts of architecture, sculpture, and painting had fallen into disrepute, and the churches which were erected were of an inferior character, devoid, in a great degree, of ornament and taste. The political disturbances which prevailed at this time may have contributed to this result. It is partly attributable also to public taste. Heathen temples were, at a later period, commonly converted into places of Christian worship. The Pantheon at Rome was consecrated to this use in the beginning of the seventh century. The altars and images being destroyed, the temples were not unfrequently consecrated under the Christian emperors as churches.

The Byzantine, or ancient Gothic style of architecture, was introduced under Theodoric, in the beginning of the sixth century;<sup>13</sup> and in this and the following centuries, many churches of this order were built in Italy, Spain, France, England, and Germany. In the tenth century, the expectation of the immediate revelation of Antichrist, and of the approaching dissolution of the world, caused the building of churches to be totally discontinued. Some attention began, in the eleventh century, to be again paid to the erection of churches, as the views respecting the near approach of the end of the world began to wear away. In the twelfth century, the resources of the Christian church were expended chiefly on cloisters, monasteries, and other establishments suited to the ascetic life, to which Christians of the age generally addicted themselves. Even through the whole period, from the seventh to the twelfth centuries, the zeal of Christians for building churches was greatly abated by their devotion to monastic life.

The vast cathedrals of Europe, in the style of modern Gothic, are the product of the Middle Ages, and some of them date back even to the thirteenth century. About this time ecclesiastical architecture attained to the height of its perfection. After the introduction of the pointed arch, at the beginning of this period, buildings were erected which exceeded, in size and architectural beauty, all which had hitherto been dedicated to the services of the church. The style of architecture, which obtained at this time, has

been usually denominated Gothic, or new Gothic; but it may more properly claim the title of German or English. It prevailed in Germany, the Netherlands, England, and Denmark; and from those countries it was introduced into Italy, France, and Spain. Some suppose that Saxony is the country to which its origin should be referred.

Some antiquaries regard the beautiful architecture of this period as a sudden effect produced by the invention of the pointed arch; while others contend that it was the result of a gradual improvement in the art during the course of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Certain, however, it is, that this style of building, after having attained its perfection more or less rapidly in the thirteenth century, prevailed almost exclusively during the fourteenth and fifteenth.

Opinions are divided also upon a question relating to the quarter from which this style was originally derived. Some persons suppose that it was brought from the Arabians or Saracens at the time of the Crusades, or from the same people, in Spain and Sicily, at a still earlier date. And it seems likely that some of its forms, at least, may have originated in this quarter. Others refer the design to the talent and invention of one or two great masters, whom they suppose to have flourished in the early part of the century, but without being able to say who they were. While others again consider that we are indebted for the improvement to the societies of masons, which existed from a very early period. These were greatly encouraged by popes and emperors during the Middle Ages, and had lodges in England and on the continent. Some assign their origin to Germany, others to France, and others to England under the Saxon kings. These architectural corporations must not be confounded with the modern freemasons.

Early in the eleventh century began the system of raising money for ecclesiastical buildings by the sale of indulgences. The example of this practice was set by Pontius, bishop of Arles, in the year 1016. According to Morinus,<sup>14</sup> the French bishops professed, during the twelfth century, to remit a third or fourth part of penance to persons who should contribute a certain sum of money toward the building or restoring of a place of worship. In this way Mauritius, bishop of Paris, built the splendid cathedral of Notre Dame, and four abbeys; for which, however, he incurred the censure of some of his contemporaries. In later times the example was frequently followed at Rome.

## EXPLANATION OF THE PLANS.

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### I.—CHURCH OF ST. SOPHIA, CONSTANTINOPLE.

1. A Font of water, where the worshippers wash before entering the church.—2. The Great Porch, probably having a portico or vestibule in front.—3. Entrance into the Narthex.—4. The Narthex.—5. Entrance into the church.—6. The Inner Porch.—7. Entrance into the Nave.—8. Entrance to court surrounding the Nave.—9. The Court.—10. The Nave.—10. (a) The Solea.—10. (b) Probable site of the Ambo.—11. Pillars supporting the Gallery.—12. The railing or lattice surrounding the Chancel or Sanctuary.—13. Entrance to the Sanctuary.—14. The Sanctuary.—15. The Altar.—16. The Canopy of the Altar.—17. The bishop's Throne.—18. The Seats of the presbyters.—19. The emperor's Throne.—20. Apartments for the Utensils of the church.—21. Passage from the church.

### II.—ST. PAUL'S CHURCH AT ROME.

1. Entrance to the Porch, or the Vestibule.—2. The Porch.—3. The Nave divided into five parts by rows of pillars.—4. The Choir, Bema, or Sanctuary.—5. The Altar.—6. The bishop's Throne.

### III.—CHURCH AT TYRE.

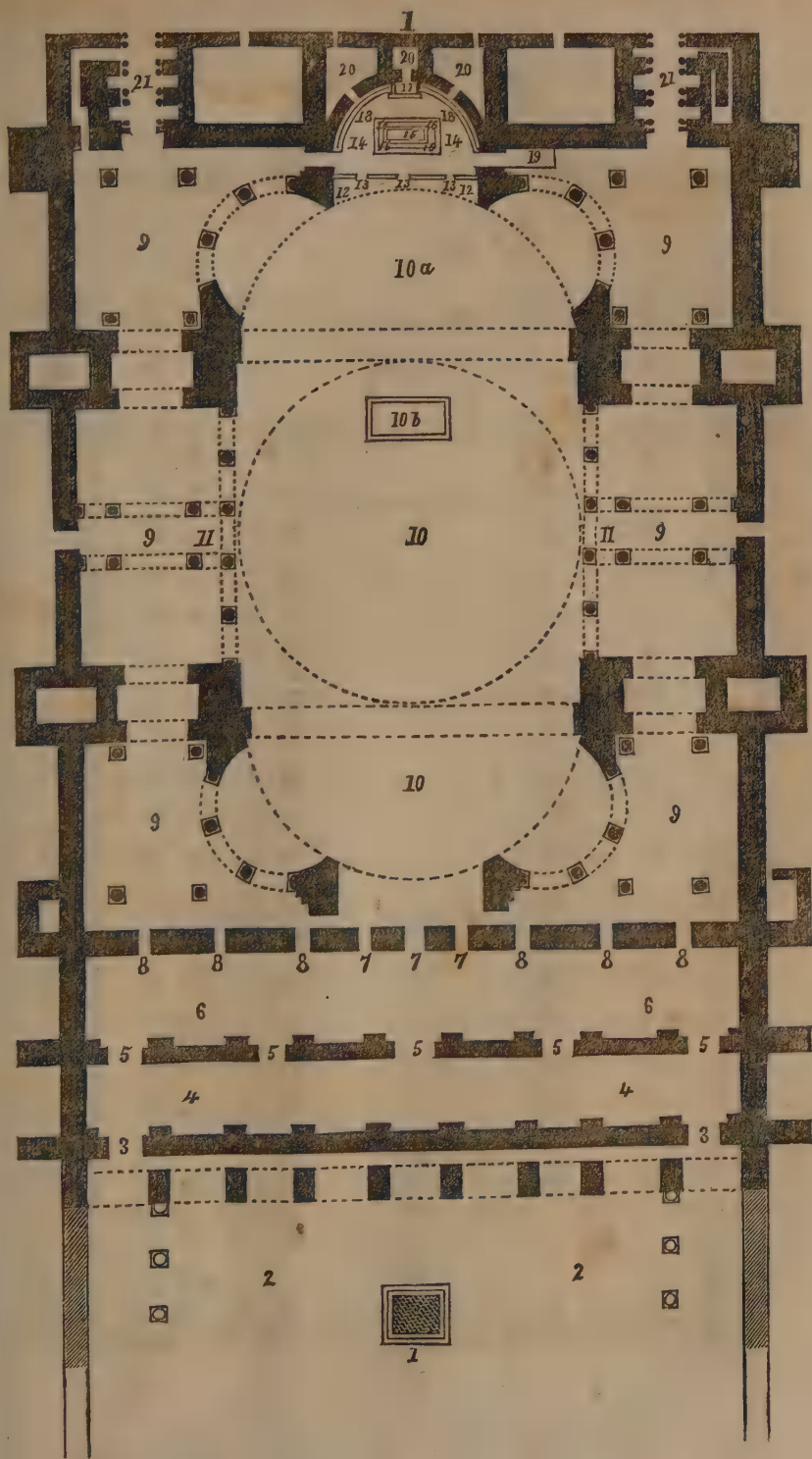
1. Entrance to the Porch, or the Vestibule.—2. The Porch.—3. Pillars of the Porch.—4. Font of water.—5. Doors of the church.—6. The Nave.—7. Probable site of the Ambo.—8. Ascent to the Sanctuary.—9. Chancel of the Sanctuary.—10. The Sanctuary.—11. The Altar.—12. The bishop's Throne.—13. The Seats of the presbyters.—14. Supposed to be the Baptistry.—14. (a) The *Oixoi*, or Antechambers.—15. The Exedrae.

### IV.—CHURCH OF ST. CLEMENT AT ROME.

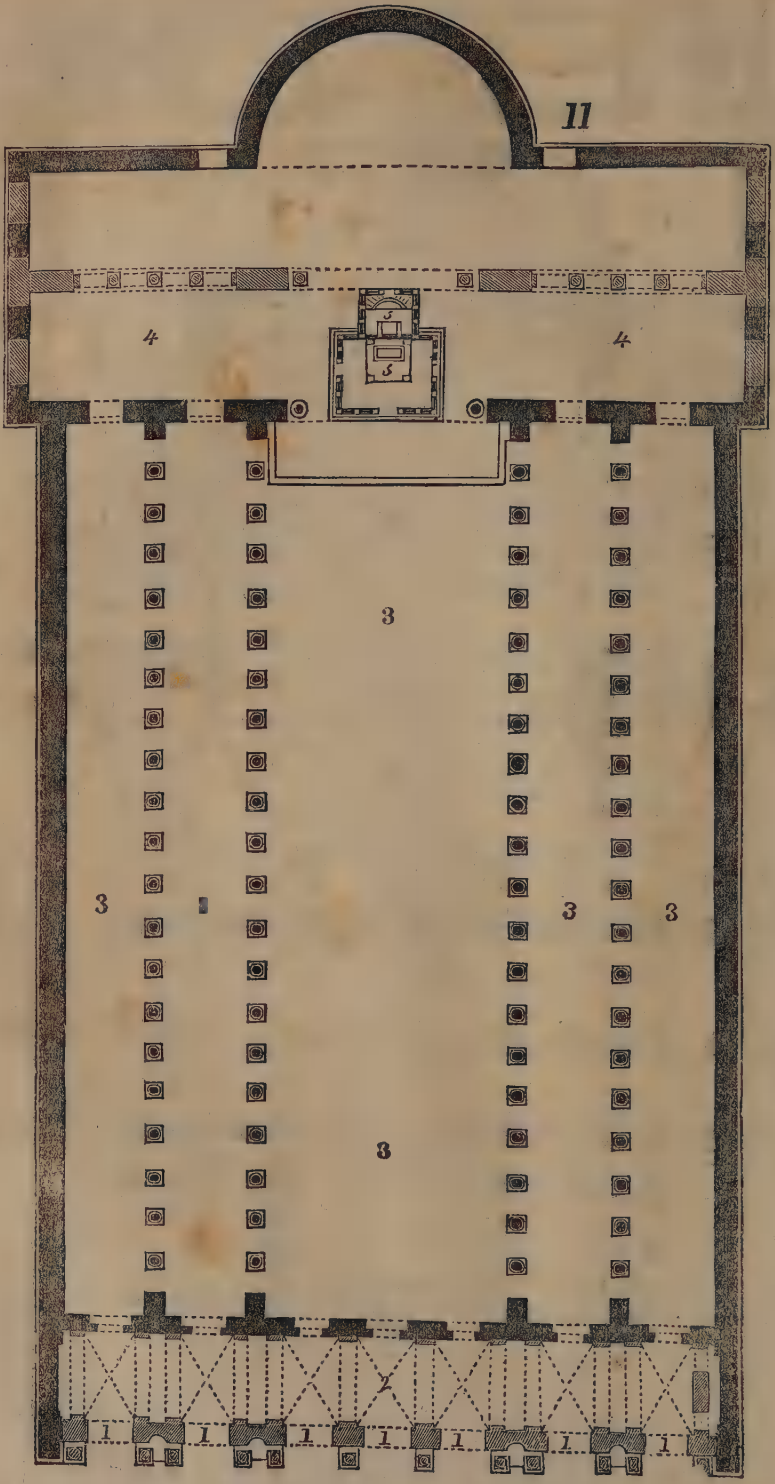
1. Entrance, with four pillars supporting the piazza.—2. The Portico, or Vestibule.—3. The Porch.—4. Entrance to the church.—5. The Nave in three divisions.—6, 7. Two Ambos within one enclosure, surrounded by the Nave.—8. The Altar with pillars.—9. Bishop's Throne.—10. Presbyters' Seats.

### V.—THE BAPTISTERY OF ST. SOPHIA.

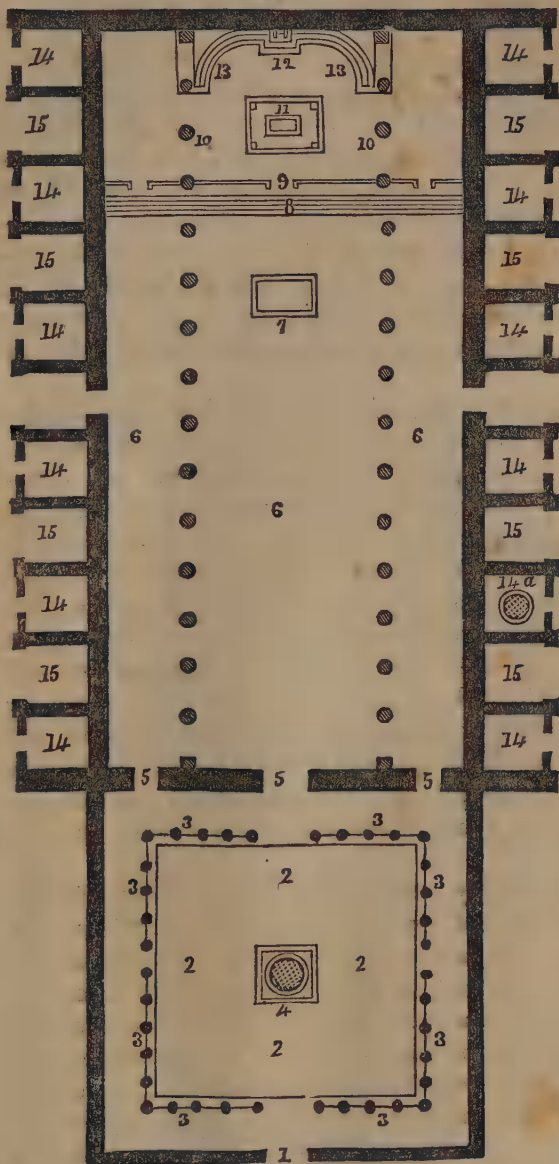
1. Stairway leading to the entrance.—2. Front Porch, or Vestibule.—3. The Basement-room of the baptistry.—4. The First Story.—5. Pillars in the basement.—6. Ascent to the font.—7. The baptismal Font.—8. The Court of the baptistry.



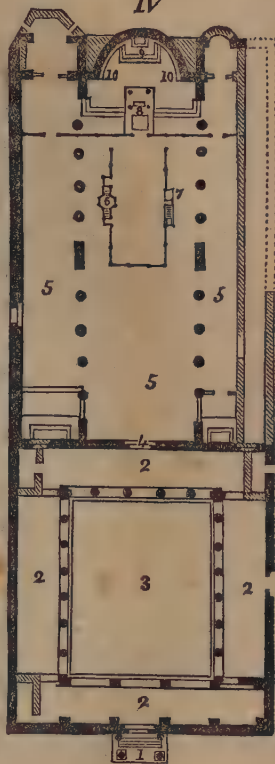




III



IV



V



## § 2. OF THE FORM, SITE, AND POSITION OF CHURCHES.

1. *Form*.—The first structures of Christians for religious worship were apparently built after the model of the Jewish synagogue, where, with the increase of their means and their number, they began to build larger edifices. The most approved form for churches was an *oblong*, with parallel sides, or the form of a ship. As it was common to speak of the Christian community under the metaphor of a ship, so the edifice in which they worshipped was denominated *navis*, a ship; *arca*, an ark; *navis Noë*, the ark of Noah; *navicula Petri*, the boat of Peter; having an allegorical reference to the perils to which the church was exposed, and its safety in God.

Another favourite form for several ages after Constantine the Great was that of a cross, σταυροῦ δίκην, σταυροειδῆ, σταυρωτά. Some were also *quadrangular*, *octagonal*, *polygonal*, and sometimes, though very rarely, *circular*; this was the usual form of heathen temples, and, therefore, was disapproved by Christians.

2. *Site*.—For the *location* of their churches the primitive Christians selected the summit of some high hill or elevated ground, unless compelled, for the sake of concealment, to resort to some place less conspicuous. At other times they erected their churches over the graves of martyrs and confessors. And not unfrequently, for some special reason, they prepared for themselves churches and oratories *under ground*, which served both for devotional purposes and as sepulchres for their dead.<sup>1</sup> In the tenth and eleventh centuries, there were many such in Germany; these were denominated *κρυπταί*, *cryptæ*.

“During the sanguinary persecutions that assailed the primitive disciples, the myrmidons of imperial vengeance often broke in upon their worship, dispersed their assemblies, and violently dispossessed them of the ‘upper rooms,’ in which they were wont to congregate; and in these circumstances, while some fled to the mountains and some to the deserts, multitudes took permanent refuge in the spacious cemeteries that were situated in the outskirts of the ancient cities. Amid the deep and unbroken solitude of the catacombs—places of abode less irksome, perhaps, from the ancient style of building, than we are apt to imagine—they solaced and animated one another from midnight till dawn, with spiritual exhortations to constancy in the faith; and while the sword of vengeance was

sheathed, and the fury of their persecutors slumbered in the night, they continued, in those undiscovered retreats, their wonted exercises of prayer and praise. About forty-three of such subterranean excavations still remain in the neighbourhood of Rome alone, containing the most convincing evidences that they were employed for the ordinances of religion as well as for concealment; and when we consider that numbers died and deposited their bones there, some of whom had eminently distinguished themselves as martyrs in the cause of Christ, it is not difficult to imagine the strong emotions that would animate the primitive Christians for the venerable dust that surrounded them, and the intense power which religion would acquire over their minds, in places which served at once for the offices of worship and for the burial of the saints.”<sup>2</sup>

3. *Position, or aspect.*—In the aspect of their churches, the ancient Christians reversed the order of the Jews, placing the altar on the east, so that in facing toward the altar in their devotions they were turned to the east, in opposition to the Jewish custom of turning toward the west in prayer. This appears to have been the general, though not, perhaps, the universal custom after the fourth century.

As the Jews began their day with the *setting sun*, so the followers of Christ began theirs with the *rising sun*. The eye of the Christian turned with peculiar interest to the east, whence the day-spring from on high had visited him. There the morning star of his hope fixed his admiring gaze. Thence arose the Sun of righteousness with all his heavenly influences. Thither in prayer his soul turned with kindling emotions to the altar of his God. And even in his grave, thither still he directed his slumbering eye, in quiet expectation of awaking to behold, in the same direction, the second appearing of his Lord, when he shall come in the clouds of heaven to gather his saints.<sup>3</sup>

### § 3. OF THE ARRANGEMENT AND CONSTITUENT PARTS.<sup>1</sup>

No established order of arrangement and division prevailed in the first three centuries. The churches of this period were rude and simple structures, varying in form and size according to circumstances; but about the fourth century, great uniformity began to be observed in this respect. The body of the church was divided into *three divisions*, corresponding with the three orders among Christians; the *clergy*, including all of their three highest

orders, the *faithful*, or *believers*, and the *catechumens*. This arrangement also bore a resemblance to the division of the Jewish temple into the holy of holies, the sanctuary, and the court. Perhaps there was an intentional reference to both of these divisions; for it must be remembered that there was, at this time, an increasing disposition in the Christian church to imitate the rites of Jewish worship, and to magnify the office of the priesthood. The distinction between the clergy and the laity was carefully maintained, and the doctrine industriously propagated that the Jewish was universally to be received as a type of the Christian religion. The bishop assumed to be the high-priest of the Christian temple, which had also its holy place, which none but the priesthood were allowed to enter. The faithful had their place, corresponding to the court of the Jews. The catechumens and others occupied the outer portion, similar to the court of the Gentiles. The three divisions were, 1. The bema or sanctuary, a sacred enclosure around the altar appropriated to the clergy. 2. The naos or nave, occupied by the faithful, the lay members of the church. 3. The narthex, or ante-temple, the place of the penitents and catechumens. Sometimes four or five divisions are enumerated; which arise from subdividing the narthex into outer and inner, and reckoning the exedrae, or outer buildings, as a portion of the church. We adhere to the threefold, or more simple division, and proceed to speak of each part in the order already described.

#### § 4. OF THE BEMA, OR SANCTUARY.\*

THE bema, or sanctuary, the inner portion of the church which was appropriated to the clergy, was known by many different names. It was called the *chorus* or *choir*,<sup>1</sup> from the chanting of the service by the clergy, *βῆμα*, from *ἀναβαίνειν*, to ascend, being an elevated platform, *ἅγιον*, *ἁγίασμα*, *ἅγιον ἅγιον*, *sanctum sanctuarium*,<sup>2</sup> etc., because it was the sanctuary where most of the sacred rites were performed. It was also denominated *ἱερατεῖον*,<sup>3</sup> *προεβυτήριον*, *διακονικόν*, *δυσιαστήριον*,<sup>4</sup> *altar*, *ἄβατον*, *ἄδυτον*,<sup>5</sup> *places not to be entered*. Neither laymen nor females were permitted, on any occasion, to enter it;† kings and emperors, in the Eastern

\* See plans, pp. 236-239.

† Sacerdotes et levitæ ante altare communicant; in choro, clerus; extra chorum, populus.—IV. *Conc. Tobet.* c. 18, A. D. 633. Intra sanctuarium altaris ingredi ad communicandum non liceat laicis, viris, vel mulieribus, nisi tantum



churches, were privileged with a seat within this sacred enclosure, from whence it received the name of ἀνάκτορον, *royal palace*.

The platform of this portion of the church was a semicircular or elliptical recess, with a corresponding arch overhead, and separated from the nave by a railing curiously wrought in the form of network, *cancelli*—hence the name *chancel*. In the earliest centuries, however, this part of the church was extremely simple in its structure, and simply furnished with a table, on which the elements were placed in the celebration of the Lord's supper. But at a later period a mysterious sanctity was attached to the place. It was styled the *sanctuary*, the *holy place*, the *most holy place*, the *altaplace*, the ἄδυτον, the ἄβατον, or more frequently, in the plural, *places not to be approached*. The bishop was now honoured by a separate throne, elevated above the other orders of the clergy, who sat below him on the right and the left.<sup>6</sup> The bishop's throne was usually covered with a vail, and for this reason was styled *cathedra velata*.<sup>7</sup> In the middle of the church stood the holy altar, or communion table, τράπεζα ἱερὰ, μυστική, πνευματική, the *sacred*, *mysterious*, or *spiritual table*, in such a position as to be easily encompassed on every side. On this the sacred elements were placed in the sacrament of the Lord's supper. On one side of the altar was a small table or secretary for receiving the customary oblations previous to the sacrament; and on the other stood the σκευοφυλάκιον, a recess into which the sacramental vessels were conveyed to be washed and replaced before being removed to the sacristy in which they were usually kept.

In process of time, this part of the church became the depository of sacred relics and the burial-place of the sainted dead.

This sanctuary, like the holy of holies in the temple, was also provided with a vail, so as to be screened at pleasure from the view of the congregation.

### § 5. OF THE ALTAR.

PAGAN nations were wont to erect altars in their sacred groves, on their high places, in their houses, by the wayside, and in public places. Toward such altars the primitive Christians entertained an irreconcilable aversion. When reproached with the charge of having no altars, no temples, no images, they simply replied,

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clericis.—1 *Conc. Bragar.* c. 13, A. D. 563. Μόνους ἔξον εἶναι τοῖς ἱερατικοῖς εἶναι εἰς τὸ θυσιαστήριον καὶ κοινωνεῖν.—*Conc. Laod.* c. 19, A. D. 320. *Comp.* c. 44

“Shrines and altars we have none:<sup>1</sup> *Delubra et aras non habemus.*” The very name of an *altar* they discarded as profane, and carefully denominated the sacramental board, not an *altar*, but a table, THE TABLE OF THE LORD. This was simply a plain table, on which the sacred elements were placed in the administration of the Lord’s supper.

The use of the term *altar*, to designate the sacramental table, belongs to the nomenclature of the hierarchy. It was unknown until the third century. When the bishop became the high-priest of the Christian church, claiming levitical authority and prerogatives in conformity with the religion of the Jews, then, in conformity with the pomp and ceremony of the temple service, the Lord’s table became the *altar* of the church, which also had become *the temple of the Lord* under the Christian dispensation. The sacred elements now became the body and blood of the great atoning sacrifice, *an offering* unto the Lord upon his holy *altar*. To give effect to this imposing ritual, and exalt the priesthood, the altar was invested with mysterious and awful sacredness. It was described as *holy, sacred, divine, princely, royal, immortal, awful, venerable, spiritual, emblematical, mystical, &c.* None but the consecrated priest was permitted to draw near it. It was accordingly religiously guarded from all profane approach. The excommunicated, catechumens, penitents, and the laity were cautiously excluded from it in the Eastern church. In the Western, however, an exception was made, on the removal of the elements, in favour of the latter when they drew near to lay upon it their free-will offerings to replenish the coffers of the church, a concession adroitly extended to the laity by the priesthood, whose means of support were essentially augmented by such pious and charitable contributions. In other instances these offerings appear to have been presented, not on the altar, but on some side-table within the chancel.

The altar was originally a table of wood, covered with a linen napkin. Subsequently it was made of stone, and highly wrought. Sometimes it was raised high upon costly pillars beneath an awning of rich tapestry, and overlaid with silver, or with pure gold, and adorned with precious stones. Several altars were sometimes provided in the same church, as are seen in the cathedrals of Europe. The cross, as still seen in the churches on the continent, was introduced in the sixth century.

From the awning above was also suspended the image of a dove,

in gold or in silver, emblematical of the Holy Spirit, as the cross upon the altar was the typical representation of the Saviour.

The *form* of the sacramental table was, at first, much the same as that of the common table then in use. But it was subsequently changed to the form of a chest or box, after the pattern of the ark of the covenant, which name was also applied to it. Within the altar sacred relics were deposited, like the tables of the law, the pot of manna, and Aaron's rod in the ark of the covenant. The capacity of the altar was somewhat enlarged sufficiently to receive many bones of the martyrs and other objects of superstitious veneration.

From the fourth century it was the custom to consecrate certain *portable altars*, for the celebration of religious rites in the absence of a Christian church. Such an altar became a part of the outfit of bishops, emperors, and military chieftains, in their travels and warlike expeditions.

In the second and third centuries it became customary to erect tables over the graves of martyrs; but whether it was merely an appropriate memorial of the deceased, or whether it had an allegorical meaning, is still a disputed question. Augustin, in his eulogy upon Cyprian of Carthage, says, that "a table was erected to God on the spot where his body was buried, which was called Cyprian's table, that Christians there might bring their offerings in prayer where he himself was made an offering to God, and drink the blood of Christ with solemn interest where the sainted martyr so freely shed his own blood;" and much more to the same effect.<sup>2</sup> From this and other passages from the fathers, it would seem that they were wont to celebrate the sacrament of the Lord's supper over the graves of martyrs. From this circumstance they were unjustly accused of paying divine honours to their saints.

But the veneration thus felt for them led to the erection of monuments to their memory within the sanctuary of the church. These monuments, moreover, were, in process of time, loaded with relics of saints, and became the occasion of such superstitions that it required the intervention of ecclesiastical councils to suppress them.<sup>3</sup> These decrees, however, only directed the overthrow of such altars or cenotaphs as were erected to the *memory* of saints, while such as actually covered their remains were suffered to stand, and were still the occasion of much superstition. Religious pilgrimages were often made to visit these sacred relics.

Various theories have been advanced in explanation of the cus-

tom of burning candles in the churches. The persecutions of the early Christians compelled them to celebrate their worship with the utmost secrecy—in caves of the earth, and under cover of the night, where such lights were indispensable. Many suppose that they were afterward continued in memory of the former trials of the church. Others ascribe the use of these lights to a superstitious imitation of the ceremonies of the Lord's supper, as first instituted by him with his disciples, who must of necessity have used lights. These, and other considerations, may have given rise to this rite, which was early received into the church, and is still retained, not only in the Roman Catholic, but also in the Lutheran churches.

### § 6. OF THE NAVE.

THE nave, or main body of the church, was called by different names derived from the uses to which it was applied. It was called the oratory of the people; because there they met for religious worship, reading the Scriptures, prayer, and the preaching of the word. It was also called the *place of assembly*, and the *quadrangle*, from its quadrangular form in contrast with the circular or elliptical form of the chancel.

In a central position stood the *ambo*, βῆμα τῶν ἀναγρωστῶν, *suggestum lectorum*, or reader's desk, elevated on a platform above the level of the surrounding seats. This was sometimes called the *pulpit* and the *tribunal of the church*,<sup>1</sup> in distinction from the βῆμα, or *tribunal of the choir*. Here the Scriptures, with the exception of the gospels and epistles, were read. All public notices, letters missive, and documents of public interest were also communicated from the reader's desk.

The gospels and epistles were *chanted* from before the altar. The sermon was also delivered by the preacher standing on the platform of the sanctuary before the altar, or on the steps leading to it. But afterward, when larger churches were erected, it became difficult for the preacher to make himself heard from this station. To remedy this inconvenience, a platform was erected for the speaker in front of the bema, within the body of the nave, and surrounded by railings called *cancelli*, which gave to this platform the name of *chancel*. Such was the origin and appropriate signification of the term. Afterward, it became, in common with many others, the name of all that space which was allotted to the altar, and to those that ministered at the altar.

In the simplicity of primitive worship, the assembly were seated promiscuously, without distinction of sex, or division into separate apartments; but the body of the church was early divided into separate parts, and *specific places assigned* to the several classes into which the audience were divided.<sup>2</sup> The object of this careful division was to prevent disorder and confusion, and to invite a fuller attendance. Such an arrangement, indeed, was indispensably necessary in connection with the various classes of believers, penitents, catechumens, etc., and the services adapted to each. But between the Eastern and Western churches there has never been any uniformity in the internal arrangements of their places of worship.

The rules relating to the ancient churches required the separation of the sexes in public worship, and this was generally observed.<sup>3</sup> The men occupied the *left* of the altar, on the south side of the church, and the women the *right*, on the north. They were separated from one another by a veil or lattice. In the Eastern churches the women and catechumens occupied the galleries above, while the men sat below. In some churches a separate apartment was also allotted to widows and virgins.

The choristers and professional singers, *κανονικοὶ ψάλται*, were provided with seats on, or near the desk. Next in order were the believers, or Christian communicants. The catechumens, arranged in the order of their several classes, occupied a place next to the believers. But they were required to withdraw at the summons of the deacons, *Ite, catechumeni!* In the rear of the catechumens sat the penitents who had been allowed a place again within the church. In the seating of the assembly and preservation of order, the ostiarii, acolyths, subdeacons, deacons, and deaconesses all bore a part.<sup>4</sup> None but believers, however, were provided with seats in the church. The catechumens, penitents, and all other classes were required to kneel or to stand. But a small portion of the ancient churches in Europe is occupied with seats, and some offer no seats to the worshippers.

A certain part of the church, styled *σωλέα, σολία, σολέας, σολειον*, etc., has been the subject of much dispute; but it is generally understood to denote the seat near the entrance to the chancel, which was appropriated to the emperors, kings, princes, etc.<sup>5</sup>

The walls of the church were surrounded by antechambers and recesses, for the accommodation of the assembly, for private reading, meditation, and prayer.<sup>6</sup> There were aisles surrounding the



nave, which separated it from these chambers. The nave was further separated from the sanctuary by a partition of lattice-work, and a curtain which could be drawn so as to screen the sanctuary entirely from the view of the assembly.<sup>7</sup> The sanctuary was usually concealed from the view of the audience except at the celebration of the Lord's supper, or when the sermon was delivered from that place.

The following directions from the Apostolical Constitutions will, perhaps, give the best idea of the internal arrangements of the church, and of the positions of the congregation in public worship:—

“And first, indeed, let the building be long, with its head to the east, with its vestries on both sides at the east end; and so it will be like a ship. In the middle, let the bishop's throne be placed; and on each side of him let the presbytery sit down; and let the deacons stand near at hand, in close and small girt garments; for they are like the mariners and managers of the ship. Through the care of these, let the laity sit in the other part, with all quietness and good order; and let the women sit by themselves, keeping silence. In the middle let the reader stand upon some high place. Let him read the books of Moses, of Joshua the son of Nun, of the Judges, and of the Kings, and of the Chronicles, and those written after the return from the captivity; and besides these, the books of Job and of Solomon, and of the sixteen prophets. But when there have been two lessons severally read, let some other person sing the hymns of David, and let the people join at the conclusions of the verses. Afterward, let our Acts be read, and the Epistles of Paul, our fellow-worker, which he sent to the churches under the guidance of the Holy Spirit; and afterward let a deacon or a presbyter read the gospels, both those which I, Matthew, and John have delivered to you, and those which Luke and Mark, the fellow-workers of Paul, received and left to you.

“And while the gospel is read, let all the presbyters and deacons, and all the people, stand up in great silence; for it is written, *Be silent and hear, O Israel.* And again, *But do thou stand there and hear.* Deut. xxvii. 9; v. 31.

“In the next place, let the presbyters, one by one, not all together, exhort the people, and the bishop in the last place, as being the commander.

“Let the porters stand at the entries of the men, and observe them. Let the deaconesses also stand at those of the women, like shipmen. For the same description and pattern was both in the

tabernacle of the testimony and in the temple of God. Deut. xxiii.

1. But if any one be found sitting out of his place, let him be rebuked by the deacon, as a messenger of the foreship, and be removed into the place proper for him. For the church is not only like a ship, but also like a sheepfold; for as the shepherds place all the irrational animals distinctly, I mean goats and sheep, according to their kind and age; and still every one runneth together, like to his like; so is it to be in the church. Let the young persons sit by themselves, if there be a place for them; if not, let them stand up. But let those who are already stricken in years sit in order. As to the children that stand, let their fathers and mothers take them to themselves. Let the younger women also sit by themselves, if there be a place for them; but, if there be not, let them stand behind the women. Let those women who are married, and have children, be placed by themselves. But let the virgins, and the widows, and the elder women, stand first of all, or sit; and let the deacon be the disposer of the places, that every one of those that come in may go to his proper place, and may not sit at the entrance. In like manner let the deacon oversee the people, that no one may whisper, nor slumber, nor laugh, nor nod. For in the church all ought to stand wisely, and soberly, and attentively, having their attention fixed upon the word of the Lord.

“After this, let all rise up with one consent, and, looking toward the east, after the catechumens and the penitents are gone out, pray to God eastward, *who ascended up to the heaven of heavens to the east*, (Psalm lxvii. 39;) remembering also the ancient situation of Paradise in the east, whence the first man, when he had yielded to the persuasion of the serpent, and disobeyed the command of God, was expelled.

“As to the deacons, after the prayer is over, let some of them attend upon the oblation of the eucharist, ministering to the Lord’s body. Let others of them watch the multitude, and keep them silent. But let that deacon who is at the high-priest’s hand, say to the people, *Let no one have any quarrel against another. Let no one come in hypocrisy*. Then let the men give the men, and the women give the women, the Lord’s kiss. But let no one do it with deceit, as Judas betrayed the Lord with a kiss.

“After this let the deacon pray for the whole church, for the whole world, and the several parts of it, and the fruits of it; for the priests and the rulers, for the high-priest and the king, and for universal peace. After this, let the high-priest pray for peace upon

the people, and bless them in these words: *The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and give thee peace.* Num. vi. 24. Let the bishop pray for the people, and say, *Save thy people, O Lord, and bless thine inheritance, which thou hast obtained with the precious blood of thy Christ, and hast called a royal priesthood and a holy nation.*

"Then let the sacrifice follow, all the people standing, and praying silently; and, when the oblation hath been made, let every rank by itself partake of the Lord's body and precious blood, in order, and approach with reverence and holy fear, as to the body of their King. Let the women approach with their heads covered, as is becoming the order of women. Moreover, let the door be watched, lest there come in any unbeliever, or one not yet initiated."

#### § 7. OF THE NARTHEX, OR ANTE-TEMPLE.

THIS was the outer division of the church within the walls. It was called *πρόναος*, *ante-temple*; *πρόπυλα*, *porticus*, *portico*; and *νάρθηξ*, or *ferula*, from its oblong or dromical shape. It was an oblong section of the building extending across, and occupying the front part of the interior of the house. It was entered by three doors leading from the outer porch. From the narthex there were also three entrances into the interior of the church. The main entrance was in the middle, directly opposite the altar, and opening immediately into the nave. Two smaller doors upon each side appear to have opened into the *ἐμβολος*, or side aisles, from which the nave was entered by doors on the north and the south.

The doors consisted of two folding leaves, and, after the eleventh century, were often ornamented with bronze, and with carved and embossed work. Some were even overlaid with silver or with gold. The several classes of worshippers entered the nave at different doors, which were called "the priest's door," "the men's door," etc.

The *vestibule*, or *πρόναος*, appropriately so called, and situated without the walls, was allotted to the catechumens and penitents. Heretics and unbelievers were also allowed a place here. The Council of Laodicea, c. 57, denied this privilege to heretics and schismatics. But the fourth Council of Carthage, c. 84, directed that no bishop should forbid one, whether Gentile, heretic, or Jew, to attend the first service—*usque ad missam catechumenorum*.

The *portico* or *outer court*, *πρόπυλα*, included the halls and colonnades which constituted the outer or front part of the narthex,

and was used for various purposes, analogous to those of a modern committee-room and vestry. Here, also, the bodies of the dead were deposited, and vigils kept around them until their interment.

The ancient Christians were accustomed to wash before entering the church, as a symbol of the purity becoming that holy place. For this purpose, in process of time, the vessel, or font of water which was used in this rite, was introduced into the narthex, or porch. Formerly it was situated without. This vessel of water was called *κρήνη*, *φιάλη*, *φρέαρ*, *κολυμβεῖον*, *λεοντάριον*, *cantheus*, *nymphacum*, etc., and is often mentioned by ancient authors.<sup>1</sup> The use of holy water has been improperly derived by some from this usage of the primitive church. This superstition began at some time subsequent to the ninth century, and was derived, like many other rites, in a corrupt age of the church, from an idolatrous usage. Sozomen relates<sup>2</sup> that Julian, on going into a certain temple in Gaul, to offer sacrifice, was, according to pagan custom, sprinkled by a priest, with olive-branches, which had been dipped in water. The use of holy water is only an imitation of this idolatrous rite, and was unknown in the church until the ninth century. The baptismal font came into use on the introduction of infant baptism, as baptisteries fell into disuse, and when the neglect of stated seasons of baptism had rendered the larger baptisteries needless.

#### § 8. OF THE OUTER BUILDINGS, OR EXEDRÆ.

UNDER this name were included all the appendages belonging to the church, such as courts, side-buildings, wings, etc., together with all those separate buildings pertaining to the main edifice, which were situated in the enclosure of the churchyard. This enclosure around the church was known by the name of *περίβολος*, and the porticos, cloisters, and colonnades, with which it was surrounded were called *στοαί*, *περίστωρον*, *τετράστωρον*, *τετράστυλον*, *ambitus*, *peristylia*, etc. The area between the wall and the church was called *atrium*, *impluvium*, *αἶθριον*, etc.

In this open space stood the demoniacs and the weeping penitents, neither of whom were permitted to enter within the walls of the church.

About the sixth century it became customary to use the *churchyard* as a burial place. In some instances it was so used as early as the fourth century.

But the most important of the exedræ were the *baptisteries*,



which were erected adjacent to the cathedral churches, and denominated, for this reason, *baptismal* and *central* churches. They must be referred to those times when it was customary for the bishop himself to administer this ordinance only in these churches, and at stated seasons. These baptisteries are spoken of as in general use in the fourth century.<sup>1</sup> Previous to this time, baptism was administered in private houses, and wherever it was most convenient. From the time of Constantine, separate buildings were erected in connection with cathedral churches for the administration of this ordinance. These structures were, in some instances, attached to the church; in others, they were detached from the main building, and were frequently octagonal; sometimes, quadrangular or cruciform.

The candidates for baptism were accustomed to meet in the baptistery, to receive the instructions requisite for their reception to this ordinance; and, for this purpose, it was divided into separate apartments, for the accommodation of both sexes. Meetings of the whole congregation and of synods could also be held here, from which we may form some idea of the magnitude of these buildings. The font was situated in the rear of the building, of suitable dimensions for the immersion of the candidates. The apartment was richly ornamented, and the image of a dove or a cross was suspended over the font.

The admissions to the church, at this time, were, of necessity, chiefly by baptism of adults converted from paganism to Christianity, but this does not imply the neglect of infant baptism. The ordinance was, in the first centuries of the church, confessedly administered by immersion. So the Greek and Arminian churches, at the present day, baptize by immersion, but they are strictly pædobaptists.

The use of baptisteries was discontinued upon the general prevalence of the Christian religion and of infant baptism. Some remains of these ancient baptisteries are still extant.

There were also several other smaller buildings situated about the church, such as the *vestry* or *repository*, *diaconicum magnum*, in which the sacred utensils, the ornaments, and robes of the clergy were deposited for safe keeping. These were intrusted to the care of the deacons and inferior clergy. It was also called *κειμηλιαρχεῖον*, *γαζοφυλάκιον*, *σκευοφυλάκιον*, *vestiarium*, *mutatorium*. Here the clergy were wont to retire for private exercises preparatory to their public performances, and for private



rehearsals and examination before the bishop; from whence it was called *secretum*, or *secretarium*. It was also a general audience-room, where friends and acquaintances met to exchange their affectionate salutations and inquiries, hence called *salutatorium*, *receptorium*, audience chamber, repository.<sup>2</sup> Many are of opinion that this building was also used as a *prison-house* for the confinement of delinquent clergymen. Others suppose that these ecclesiastical prisons were separate edifices, called *decanica*; but that there were such places of confinement is undeniable.<sup>3</sup>

There was another class of buildings called *pastophoria*, but the learned are not agreed respecting the use of them. According to Rosenmüller, they were a kind of guard or watch house. Others suppose them to have been apartments for the accommodation of the clergy. Others, perhaps with greater probability, understand by them small recesses or porticos upon the outer walls of the church.

*Libraries were, at a very early period, collected and kept in connection with the churches,*<sup>4</sup> which were furnished, not merely with the Scriptures in the original and in translations, together with the books necessary for the church service, but with commentaries, homilies, catechisms, and theological works. These libraries were of great importance, and often were very extensive. The libraries of Alexandria, Rome, and Constantinople were kept in separate buildings, adjacent to the church.<sup>5</sup> From the libraries of Jerusalem and Cæsarea, both Eusebius and Jerome chiefly derived the materials for their writings. The library of St. Sophia contained 120,000 volumes.

*Schools were very early established in connection with the churches.* If no building was provided for this purpose, the schools were taught in the baptistery and the vestry. The teachers of these schools always instructed their catechumens privately, and were never allowed to give public instructions. The Sixth General Council of Constantinople directs the presbyters in country towns and villages to have schools to teach all such children as were sent to them, for which they should exact no reward, nor receive any thing, unless the parents of the children thought fit to make them a charitable donation by way of voluntary contribution. From all which it is apparent that the primitive Christians regarded these schools as having an intimate connection with their churches, and essential to the promotion of the same great end.

The bishops and clergy had houses allotted to them adjacent to the church, called *οἶχοι βασιλικοί*.<sup>6</sup>

Bathing-houses are also mentioned, and public rooms, called ἀναξαιπύρτια, *diversoria*, lodging-places, supposed by some to be a kind of inn,—by others they are regarded as a common place of resort for rest and for recreation.

Hospitals for the poor and the sick were also maintained in connection with the churches.

### § 9. OF TOWERS, BELLS, AND ORGANS.

*Towers.*—These were entirely unknown in the first seven centuries. The term πύργος, which occurs in the description of the ancient churches, is used, not in the usual sense of a tower, but as synonymous with the βήμα or ἄμβων, the sanctuary, or the *desk*.<sup>1</sup> These towers are first mentioned in the time of Charlemagne. A chapel built for him, in the year 873, was provided with two towers for bells. A church of a cloister, of a date still earlier, 837, is also described as having a tower attached to it.<sup>2</sup> The same is true of the cathedral church at Mentz, A. D. 978.<sup>3</sup>

Authors are not agreed respecting the origin and use of these appendages of the church. The probable opinion is that they were erected on the first introduction of *bells*, and for the purpose of providing a convenient place for the suspension of them. Such the name implies, and so Du Cange explains the term.<sup>4</sup> They were then belfries, erected not for ornament, but for convenience merely; and often were separate structures totally detached from the church.

The *Gothic towers* appear from the first to have been erected for ornament. They are the creation of the Middle Ages, when the taste of the age sought to depart as much as possible from the style of the primitive church. For further particulars, see References.<sup>5</sup>

*Bells.*<sup>6</sup>—Bells were unknown to the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans. Even if the *tintinnabula* of the Romans were bells, they were very inconsiderable in comparison with church-bells of later date. These were not in use earlier than the seventh century. The most probable opinion is that which ascribes the first introduction of them to Sabianus, bishop of Rome, who succeeded Gregory the Great in the year 604.<sup>7</sup> In the seventh and eighth centuries they were in common use in the churches in France. Near the close of the ninth century, the church of St. Sophia, at Constantinople, was furnished with bells.<sup>8</sup> But they have never received much favour in the East. The Arabs and Turks, especially, have always maintained a settled aversion to them.

In the place of bells, in the East, messengers were sent out to summon the people to worship.<sup>9</sup> In Egypt, a trumpet was blown. The inmates of their cloisters were summoned to prayers by knocking upon their cells with a billet of wood, as is still the custom with the Nestorian Christians. The Greeks had two instruments for this purpose, which they called *σφύαντρον* and *ἀγιοσιδῆριον*. These are described by Bingham as consisting of boards, or plates of iron, full of holes, which were held in the hand and struck with a mallet.

In the West, on the contrary, the bell was considered as a sacred and indispensable appendage of a church. The following is a specimen of the inscriptions which were frequently written upon the church bell :—

“*Laudo Deum verum, plebem voco, congrego clerum,  
Defunctos ploro, nimbum [al. pestem] fugo, festaque honoro.*”

The custom of consecrating and baptizing bells is a superstition of early date, perhaps as early as the eighth century ; that of naming the bells of churches, dates no farther back than the tenth or eleventh century.

When the enormous bells of Moscow, Vienna, Paris, Toulouse, Milan, etc. were cast, is not known. They are probably the production of the Middle Ages. They harmonize well with the vast cathedrals and towers of that period, so distinguished for its massive and imposing structures.

The tolling of bells at the decease of a person, and at funerals, was originally an expedient of a superstitious age, to frighten away demons that were supposed to be hovering around to prey upon the spirit of the dead or dying man. This superstition was widely extended during the dark ages. Bells were often rung with violence, also, during a tempest, to frighten away demons, and avert the storms which they were supposed to raise.

The following extract, from the Edinburgh Encyclopædia, is inserted as descriptive of these superstitions :—

“In regard to the superstitious use of bells, we shall probably find the ringing of them at funerals to have originated in the darkest ages, but with a different view from that in which they are now employed. . . . Reasoning from the customs of the ancients, that have been transmitted to us in innumerable superstitions, which extensive analogies only enable us to recognise, we may, partly, connect the ringing of bells for persons in the agonies of death, with

the virtue supposed to reside in the sound of brass. It was to avert the influence of demons. But if the superstitions of our ancestors did not originate in this imaginary virtue, while they preserved the practice, it is certain that they believed the mere noise had the same effect; and as, according to their ideas, evil spirits were always hovering around to make a prey of departing souls, the tolling of bells struck them with terror. We may trace the practice of tolling bells at funerals to the like source. This has been practised from times of great antiquity; the bells being muffled for the sake of greater solemnity, in the same way as we see drums muffled in military funerals. Possibly it was also with the view of averting the influence of evil spirits, as the soul was not believed to pass immediately to the regions of light or darkness. The efficacy of bells, and other noises, in putting demons to flight, is recorded among the ancients; and from them was more widely extended during the more barbarous ages. . . . In Italy, during great tempests, the women assembled, ringing bells and beating cymbals, in the noise of which, the learned Moresin observes, they confided more than in the efficacy of fasting and prayer. On St. John's day, the bells were violently rung, and other superstitions practised, to put devils to flight, and avert the effects of storms which they were supposed to raise in the air.

"We are, therefore, entitled to conclude that the ringing of bells for persons in the agonies of death, at funerals, and to dispel tempests, has originally had relation to one common object, the expulsion of demons. Here, also, we may seek the consecration or exorcising of bells, practised in the Roman Catholic churches, and, perhaps, the cause of naming them after particular saints. In the Council of Cologne, it is said, 'Let bells be blessed, as the trumpets of the church militant, by which the people are assembled to hear the word of God; the clergy to announce his mercy by day, and his truth in their nocturnal vigils; that by their sound the faithful may be invited to prayers, and that the spirit of devotion in them may be increased. The fathers have also maintained that demons, affrighted by the sound of bells calling Christians to prayers, would flee away; and when they fled, the persons of the faithful would be secure; that the destruction of lightnings and whirlwinds would be averted, and the spirits of the storm defeated.' All these things were promoted by consecration; and a credulous bishop narrates several miracles displayed by consecrated bells, which, without much difficulty, we can trace to natural causes.



Durand, the author of the *Rituals of the Roman Church*, says, 'For expiring persons, bells must be tolled, that people may put up their prayers. This must be done twice for a woman, and thrice for a man; for a clergyman as many times as he had orders; and at the conclusion, a peal of all the bells must be given, to distinguish the quality of the persons for whom the people are to offer up their prayers.'"<sup>10</sup>

*Organs.*<sup>11</sup>—The organ constituted no part of the furniture of the ancient churches. The first instance on record of its use in the church, occurred in the time of Charlemagne, in the eighth century, who received one as a present from Constantine, which was set up in the church at Aix-la-Chapelle.<sup>12</sup> The musicians of this city and of Mentz, learned to play on the organ in Italy, from which it appears that they were already known in that country. We have authentic accounts of the manufacture of this instrument in Germany, as early as the tenth century.<sup>13</sup> England, about the same time, distinguished herself by the manufacture of organs of colossal dimensions.

The Greek church has never favoured the use of the organ in the churches, and has generally restricted it to the theatre and musical concerts. Even in the Western church the organ was not received with universal favour. "Our church," says Thomas Aquinas, (A. D. 1250,) "does not use musical instruments, as harps and psalteries, in the praise of God, lest she should seem to Judaize." From which some have erroneously supposed that the organ was not used in any churches previous to this time.

The use of the organ in religious worship was not regarded with favour by the reformers generally. Luther, from his great fondness for music, favoured the continuance of the organ. It is accordingly in use in almost all the Lutheran churches to this day. Calvin strictly opposed it, as a theatrical instrument unsuited to the devotional ends of sacred music. The opposition of Erasmus to organs is well known. The Puritans also regarded them with special aversion as instruments of sacred music. The kirk of Scotland, to this day, totally excludes them from the church. A few years since an organ was presented to a certain church in Scotland, which gave rise to spirited controversy; a volume was published against this innovation, and the offensive instrument was removed by the authority of the synod.



## § 10. OF THE DOORS OF THE CHURCH.

To insure due secrecy in celebrating the mysteries of their religion, the ancient Christians constructed the doors of their churches with peculiar care. As we have already seen, they set apart, by the solemn rites of ordination, a class of men to guard the doors, and prevent the intrusion, not only of the profane, but of their own catechumens and penitents. Such was the profound secrecy in which they celebrated certain of their religious rites. In all this they imitated the Jews; and the early fathers, like the writers of the Old and New Testaments, from this usage derived abundant metaphors relating to the doors of the church, of heaven, of the kingdom, etc. Compare the following passages of Scripture, among many others:—2 Chron. viii. 14; Ps. lxxxiv. 11; cxviii. 19, 20; John x. 1; xx. 19; Acts xiv. 27; Rev. xxii. 14, etc.

It was customary, in the earliest ages of Christianity, to post upon the doors of the church the names of all excommunicated persons. At a period somewhat later, persons intending marriage were also published in the same manner. This was also the place for posting all proclamations and decisions of the church, and public notices of every kind.

There were generally three main entrances to the churches, after the pattern of the temple at Jerusalem. These were provided with outer and inner doors, distinguished by the names ἀμφιδύρα and τελευταίον θυρῶν. The main entrance over against the high altar was called *beautiful*, in imitation of the gate of the same name in the temple. Acts iii. 2, 10. The different sexes entered by different doors;<sup>1</sup> these were made of the choicest and most durable wood, wrought with peculiar care, and richly ornamented with arabesque, bronze, gold, or silver plate; not unfrequently they were made of solid brass or bronze. Several of this kind still remain in the different countries of Europe.<sup>2</sup>

The date of the building or dedication of the church was usually inscribed on the doors. Subjects of sacred history were often represented by curiously carved work on the sacred portals. In addition to this there were inscriptions of various kinds, consisting of a motto, a doctrinal sentiment, a passage of Scripture, a doxology, or a prayer. A single specimen is here given, as taken from an ancient church. On the outer side of the door:—

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Pax tibi sit, quincunque Dei penetralia Christi  
Pectore pacifico candidus ingrederis.

On the inside:—

Quisquis ab æde Dei, perfectis ordine votis,  
Egrederis, remea corpore; corde mane.

### § 11. OF THE PAVEMENTS AND WALLS OF THE CHURCH.

THE floor of the church consisted of pavement carefully laid, or smooth marble. In large churches the narthex had a pavement of plaster; the flooring of the nave was plastering or boards; while the chancel was adorned with mosaic. Not unfrequently there was a tessellated pavement of particoloured and polished marble, constituting a rich mosaic work. A curious specimen of this ancient mosaic was found in 1805, near Salzburg, delineating the story of Theseus and Ariadne. Such decorations, in imitation of the Jewish temple (1 Kings vi. 15–30) were used in the churches as early as the fourth century. From the seventh to the tenth century, it became customary to encumber and disfigure the nave and choir with the graves of the dead, and from that period the floors were occupied with palisades, monuments, and epitaphs; and all unity and symmetry was destroyed.

The walls and the canopy were also ornamented with inscriptions, mosaics, paintings, and bas-relief. The paintings were executed on wood, metals, and canvas. The bas-relief was executed in gypsum, mortar, stone, or metal, in imitation of the ornaments of the temple. Votive offerings of shields, arms, standards, and the like, were also hung upon the walls. To these the lights were attached and suspended from the canopy. Vaulted roofs are of later origin.

We subjoin from Eusebius an account of the decoration of the church of the Holy Sepulchre, built by Constantine in the fourth century:—"At the side opposite to the sepulchre, which was the eastern side, the church itself was erected; a noble work, rising to a vast height, and of great extent, both in length and breadth. The interior of this structure was floored with marble slabs of various colours; while the external surface of the walls, which shone with polished stones exactly fitted together, exhibited a degree of splendour in no respect inferior to that of marble. With regard to the roof, it was covered on the outside with lead, as a protection against the rains of winter. But the inner part of the roof was

finished with sculptured fretwork, extended in a series of connected compartments, like a vast sea, over the whole church; and, being overlaid throughout with the purest gold, caused the entire building to glitter as it were with rays of light."<sup>1</sup>

## § 12. OF THE WINDOWS OF THE CHURCH.

No aspersion was ever more unjust than that which charged the primitive Christians with seeking concealment and hating the light. In imitation of the temple at Jerusalem (1 Kings vi. 4) they sought, from the beginning, to furnish their churches fully with light. It is customary to refer the first use of glass windows to the third century; but, in the opinion of many, they had an earlier origin, as is shown in the ruins of Herculaneum. In France, windows, both of coloured and of cut glass, were in use in the sixth century. Venantius Fortunatus, a poet of the fifth, has a distich respecting the cathedral church at Paris, from which it would seem that *glass* windows were then in use:

Prima capit, radios vitreis oculata fenestris  
Artificisque manu clausit in arce, diem.

From the history of the venerable Bede, on the other hand, it would seem that these were not in use in England in the seventh century, but were subsequently introduced from France.

Pliny affirms that the art of *painting* glass was known to the Romans. If so, it must have been lost again; for no traces of the art are discoverable until the beginning of the eleventh century. It was brought to perfection in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and is justly regarded as the most finished specimen of the arts in the Middle Ages. After a slumber of three hundred years, it is beginning to be again revived in the nineteenth century.

The windows of churches were not only greater in number, but larger in dimensions, than those of private dwelling-houses. In the Carlovingian dynasty, however, the windows were small and round, and very far from affording sufficient light.

## § 13. OF THE ORNAMENTS OF THE CHURCH.

AFTER the establishment of the hierarchy, churches were adorned with various ornaments more or less costly.

Among these may be reckoned the *anathemata*, or gifts from different individuals, which were suspended upon pillars, or placed in some other conspicuous situation, and intended as memorials of some particular mercy or benefit received from God. Eusebius, in his account of the church of the Holy Sepulchre, says, "He further enriched it with numberless offerings of inexpressible beauty, consisting of gold, silver, and precious stones in various forms, the skill and elaborate arrangement of which, in regard to their magnitude, number, and variety, we have not leisure, at present, to describe particularly."<sup>1</sup>

It is but justice to the ancient fathers to remark that they were very far from bestowing unqualified approbation upon that style of gaudy magnificence in which their churches were decorated. St. Ambrose says, "that whatever is done in purity, and with sincerity, is commendable, but that it is neither praiseworthy to rear superfluous structures, nor to neglect such as are needful; that the priest ought, especially, to adorn the temple of God with becoming graces; that it should be rendered resplendent by acts of humility and charity; in giving to the stranger according to his necessities, and as the dictates of humanity require; not by pride, self-indulgence, and personal aggrandizement, at the expense of the poor."<sup>2</sup> Jerome, in various passages, inveighs against the pomp and pride displayed in the churches and in the attire of the priesthood.<sup>3</sup> Chrysostom complains of the vanity, superstition, and oppression of the poor, with which their churches were erected, though he objects not to these expenditures upon the churches in themselves considered.<sup>4</sup> St. Bernard rebukes this extravagant folly with so much simplicity and fervour, that the reader will be interested to hear him in his own tongue.\*

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\* Tali quadam arte spargitur æs, ut multiplicetur. Expenditur, ut augeatur, et effusio copiam parit. Ipso quippe visu sumptuosarum, sed mirandarum vanitatum, accenduntur homines magis ad offerendum, quam ad orandum. Sic opes opibus hauriuntur, sic pecunia pecuniam trahit: quia nescio, quo pacto, ubi amplius divitiarum cernitur, ibi offertur libentius. *Auro tectis reliquiis* saginantur oculi, et loculi aperiuntur. Ostenditur *pulcherrima forma Sancti vel Sanctæ* alicujus, et eo creditur sanctior, quo *coloratior*. Currunt homines ad osculandum, invitantur ad donandum; et magis mirantur pulcra, quam venerantur sacra. Ponuntur dehinc in ecclesia *gemmatæ, non coronæ, sed rotæ*, circumseptæ lampadibus, sed non minus fulgentes *insertis lapidibus*. Cernimus et pro candelabris *arbores quasdam erectas*, multo æris pondere, miro artificis opere fabricatas, nec magis coruscantes superpositis lucernis, quam suis gemmis. Quid, putas, in his omnibus queritur? penitentium compunctio, an intuentium admiratio? O vanitas vanitatum, sed non vanior, quam insanior! Fulget ecclesia in parietibus, et in

## § 14. OF IMAGES.

THE primitive Christians regarded with irreconcilable aversion all pictures or images, none of which were allowed in their churches. The Roman emperors required divine honours to be paid to their statues, and the refusal to do this on the part of Christians was frequently the occasion of their vindictive persecution, as is seen in Pliny's letter to Trajan, cited above, pp. 34-6. This circumstance, together with their abhorrence of paganism, effectually excluded images from the churches of the early Christians.

The origin of the custom of introducing images into churches is described by Neander as follows:—"It was not in the church, but in the family, that religious images first came into use among the Christians. In their daily intercourse with men, the Christians saw themselves everywhere surrounded by the objects of pagan mythology, or, at least, by objects offensive to their moral and Christian sentiments. Representations of this sort covered the walls in shops, were the ornaments of drinking-vessels and seal-rings, on which the pagans frequently had engraven the images of their gods, so that they might worship them when they pleased. It was natural that, in place of these objects, so offensive to their religious and moral sentiments, the Christians should substitute others more agreeable to them. Thus they preferred to have on their goblets the figure of a shepherd carrying a lamb on his shoulder, which was the symbol of our Saviour rescuing the repentant sinner, according to the gospel parable.<sup>1</sup> And Clement of Alexandria says, in reference to the seal-rings of the Christians,<sup>2</sup> 'Let our signets be a dove, (the symbol of the Holy Spirit,) or a fish,\* or a ship sailing

pauperibus eget. Suos lapides induit auro, et suos filios nudos deserit. De sumptibus egenorum servitur oculis divitum. Inveniunt curiosi, quo delectentur, et non inveniunt miseri, quo sustententur. Utquid saltem sanctorum imagines non reveremur, quibus utique ipsum, quod pedibus conculcatur, *scalet pavimentum*. *Sæpe spuitur in ore Angelî, sæpe alicujus sanctorum facies calcibus tunditur transeuntium*. Et si non sacris his imaginibus, cur vel non parcitur *pulcris coloribus*? Cur decoras, quod mox fœdandum est? Cur depingis, quod mox necesse est conculcari? Quid ibi valent venustæ formæ, ubi pulvere maculantur assiduo? Denique quid hæc ad pauperes, ad Monachos, ad spirituales vivos? Nisi forte et hic memoratum jam poetæ versiculum propheticus ille respondeatur: *Domine, dilexi decorum domus tuæ, et locum habitationis gloriæ tuæ*. Assentio: patiamur et hæc fieri in ecclesia: quia etsi noxia sunt vanis et avaris, non tamen simplicibus et devotis.—*Opp. t. i. p. 545, ed. Bened.*

\* The same allusion as in the case of the fishermen,—also an allusion to the anagram of Christ's name, ΙΧΘΥΣ—Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, Θεοῦ Υἱός, Σωτήρ.



toward heaven, (the symbol of the Christian church, and of the individual Christian soul,) or a lyre, (the symbol of Christian joy,) or an anchor, (the symbol of Christian hope;) and he who is a fisherman will not be forgetful of the apostle Peter, and of the children taken from the water;\* for no images of gods should be engraved on the rings of those who are forbidden all intercourse with idols; no sword or bow on the rings of those who strive after peace; no goblets on the rings of those who are the friends of sobriety.' Yet religious emblems passed from domestic use into the churches, perhaps as early as the end of the third century. The walls of them were painted in this manner. The Council of Elvira, in the year 303, opposed this innovation as an abuse, and forbade 'the objects of worship and adoration to be painted on the walls.'"<sup>3</sup>

All this was in harmony also with the ceremonials of the sensuous religion of the age, which, relying more on the outward form than on the inward spirit, sought by imposing rituals to enforce religious truth, rather than by a direct appeal to the understanding and the conscience. Mosheim and Augusti represent this to have been eminently the spirit of several sects of the Gnostics, with whom it was a favourite sentiment, "that religious truth could better be enforced by pictorial representations than by sermons and by books." By such paintings they taught their religious tenets. Gregory the Great, of the sixth century, particularly commends this as a happy expedient for instructing the unlearned in religion. "What the letter is to the learned, such is the painting to the unlearned. For here they see what they ought to obey, so that the ignorant may read their duty in the pictured representation." "Pictures, therefore, are introduced into churches, that they who cannot read from the written word, may still understand it as depicted on the walls."†

In these sentiments we recognise the temporizing spirit of the church, in accommodating itself to the superstitions of the age. This Gregory greatly encouraged, in total opposition to the spirit of primitive Christianity. It was, indeed, a favourite maxim of this renowned prelate, that Christianity should accommodate itself

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\* The Christians, whom the Divine teacher, the θεῖος παιδαγωγός, Christ, leads through baptism to regeneration.

† Quod legentibus Scriptura, hoc idiotis præstat pictura cernentibus.—*Epist.* lib. ix. ind. 3, ep. 9. Idcirco enim pictura in ecclesiis adhibetur, ut ii, qui literas nesciunt, saltem in parietibus videndo legunt, quæ legere in codicibus non valent.—*Lib. vii. ind. 2, ep. 3.*

more and more to paganism, to facilitate conversions to the religion of Christ. Under such influences and such teaching, the Christian church was soon filled with images, pictures, and statues more becoming an idol's temple than a sanctuary for the worship of the living God.

These images, though at first employed as aids to devotion, soon became the objects of almost idolatrous veneration. A single extract from a letter of the Emperor Michael to Louis the Pious, in the ninth century, is added, in illustration of the spirit of the age:—“First of all, they put away the cross from the churches, and set up images instead, before which they placed their candles and burned incense, and revered them as though they were the sacred cross on which Christ was crucified. Before these images they sang psalms and prayed and implored blessings. They clothed these images in linen, and made them godfathers to their children in baptism. Monks, on shaving their heads and in taking their vows, let their hair fall into the bosom of the image. Many priests scraped the paint from the statues, and mingled it with the bread and wine of the Lord's supper, and ministered it to the communicants. Others placed the sacred elements in the hands of the image as they were presented to those who partook of this ordinance.”<sup>4</sup>

Such puerilities and superstitions gave rise to the famous war respecting image-worship, (A. D. 726,) which was characterized by many atrocities, and continued to distract the church during the space of one hundred and twenty years, until 842, when the superstitious practices respecting the use of images were finally confirmed and legalized.

The antagonistic spirit by which this protracted strife against image-worship was sustained, found an appropriate expression in the stern remonstrance of many of the ancient fathers. “As God admonished the Jews,” says Jerome, † A. D. 420, “so hath he also warned us, who claim to be the church, not to trust in the splendour of our edifices, in gilded and fretted ceilings, and marble walls. Let not these be called the temple of God. That alone is the true temple which is adorned with the indwelling of a true, a holy life, and all the Christian graces.”<sup>5</sup>

Isidore of Pelusium, † A. D. 449, complains “that the church edifices were garnished too richly, while the church itself was disfigured, and adds that he would prefer to have lived in that age in which the place of assembly was not, indeed, so richly

ornamented, but the church was crowned with heavenly gifts, than in his own age, when lofty edifices were erected and finished in splendid style, while the church itself stood naked and empty.”<sup>6</sup>

Epiphanius, † A. D. 403, on observing in a strange church which he had entered for devotional purposes, a veil, hanging on which was depicted the image of Christ, or of some saint, indignantly tore it down, and urgently remonstrated against the introduction of such things into the church, as contrary to the spirit of our religion.<sup>7</sup>

§ 15. OF THE VENERATION FOR SACRED PLACES, AND THE PRIVILEGES ATTACHED TO THEM.<sup>1</sup>

It became customary in the fourth century to set apart the church to religious uses by a solemn consecration, by which it was invested with peculiar sanctity. The remarks which follow relate particularly to churches subsequent to this period.

The early Christians, like the Jews, manifested a profound veneration for the house of God, and zealously guarded it, not only against the intrusion of the profane, but against secular and sacrilegious uses. Their own attendance upon its ordinances was marked with every demonstration of religious awe. “Let both men and women,” says Clemens of Alexandria, “come to church in comely apparel, with a serious gait, with modest silence, and love unfeigned; chaste both in body and mind, so that they may be duly prepared to offer prayer to God.”<sup>2</sup> “They came into the church as into the palace of the Great King. Before going into the church, they used to wash at least their hands, carrying themselves there with the most profound silence and devotion. Nay, so great was the reverence which they bore to the church, that the emperors themselves, who otherwise never went without their guard about them, when they came to go into the church, used to lay down their arms—to leave their guard behind them, and to put off their crowns.”<sup>3</sup>

The churches, however, were occasionally the scenes of disorder and sacrilege; especially in the fourth and fifth centuries, during the Arian controversy. To prevent these, Honorius decreed, A. D. 398, the sentence of scourging and banishment upon any one who should enter the church and disturb the bishop or minister in the discharge of his duties. If he interrupted the religious services, or offered violence to the litany, he was to be sentenced to death by any court, civil or military.<sup>4</sup>

The following were some of the rules by which the church was guarded from secular and sacrilegious uses.

(a) Neither churches nor any of their utensils or implements could be sold, mortgaged, or assessed for taxes; to this rule, however, there were occasional exceptions.

(b) Churches could not be used for courts of either civil or criminal cases, nor for popular elections, or legislative assemblies, but they might be opened for the accommodation of ecclesiastical councils, and for the coronation of princes.

(c) No marketing, or exchanges in buying or selling of any kind was allowed in the church, much less were annual fairs permitted in the neighbourhood of a church.

(d) No convivial assemblies were in any instance to be held in the churches. And even the *love-feasts*, the abuses of which in the Corinthian church were so severely censured by the apostle Paul, (1 Cor. xi. 18 *et seq.*), were not allowed in the churches.

(e) Neither were churches to be opened for the entertainment of strangers and travellers.

(f) It was also a high offence to speak irreverently of the house of God, or unworthily to engage in any official act of public worship.<sup>5</sup>

All who entered into the church were first required to wash their hands, and for this purpose water was constantly kept in the front part of the church, as has been already stated, § 7, p. 251. This rite, as explained by Tertullian and others, was emblematical of that purity of heart with which the worshipper ought to engage in his public religious duties.<sup>6</sup> In some of the Eastern churches, particularly in Abyssinia, it was customary, also, for Christians to put off their shoes on entering the church, after the example of Moses. Exod. iii. 5. Kings and princes, and military commanders reverently laid aside their badges of honour and of office on entering the church,<sup>7</sup> a custom which even Julian the Apostate commends as worthy of imitation.<sup>8</sup> It was, moreover, an ancient and very general usage to kiss the threshold of the doors and the altars of the churches, as another token of reverence.<sup>9</sup> Afterward it became usual to kiss the paintings and utensils.

Of the same general character were the numerous directions given respecting a quiet, devout, and becoming demeanour in the church in the time of religious worship and during the celebration of the sacrament. These directions required the worshipper to appear in decent apparel, to kneel or stand in prayer, to keep the



head uncovered, to fold the hands, and to refrain from gazing about. All noise and bustle, shrieking, clapping, hemming, and spitting, was expressly forbidden, together with all irreverent gesticulation, reading, and mimicking: all which serves to show how fully the Christian church, at all times, participated in the sentiment of the pious Israelite, "Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth."

No account remains of the formal consecration of churches earlier than the fourth century. Eusebius describes this solemnity on two different occasions, and records the sermon which he himself preached in one instance.<sup>10</sup> The act of consecration consisted in prayer and other religious solemnities, in connection with the public discourse.

The dedication must be performed by the bishop. No church could even be built without his consent previously obtained; and no religious service could be held in the church until it had been consecrated.<sup>11</sup> The simple and appropriate rites of consecration were afterward changed by Catholic superstition into a multitude of mystical ceremonies totally repugnant to the original design of this solemnity.

#### § 16. OF THE CHURCH AS A PLACE OF REFUGE.

THE ancient historians and Christian fathers mention many instances in which the church and the altar were made a safe place of refuge, not only for Christians, but for Jews and pagans. Even by barbarous nations the church was respected as a sacred asylum. Both Jews and Gentiles had long been familiar with similar usages. The Christian church, therefore, like the pagan temples and Jewish cities of refuge, very naturally became a sacred retreat, which avenging justice feared to invade. This right, probably, was first established under the reign of Constantine the Great, and was confirmed and enlarged by succeeding emperors; but the privilege was greatly abused, and, as early as A. D. 392, became the subject of complaint, as preventing the ends of justice, by offering a hiding-place for every fugitive from justice. Arcadius, at the instigation of Etropius, A. D. 397, is said to have abrogated the right within his empire.<sup>1</sup> The clergy were uniformly opposed to this decree of Arcadius. A council which was held in Africa, A. D. 409, sent a delegation to the emperor for its repeal.<sup>2</sup> Chrysostom especially distinguished himself by his zeal against it:<sup>3</sup> from him it appears



that Arcadius *did not* repeal his law. But this was done, in relation to the Western church, by his brother Honorius, A. D. 414,<sup>4</sup> which again was further established and enlarged by his son, Theodosius the younger, A. D. 431.<sup>5</sup> The privileges of this right were finally defined by Justinian, A. D. 535, to this effect—that the sanctuary should afford no protection to murderers, adulterers, ravishers of virgins, and offenders of the like character, it being the intent of the privilege not to give protection to such criminals, but to offer an asylum to such as were exposed to violence and abuse from them. If, therefore, any who were guilty of such crimes fled to the altar for refuge, they were to be immediately taken thence and punished according to law.<sup>6</sup>

This law of Justinian, however, was strenuously opposed by the clergy, as being an invasion of their right of jurisdiction over the churches, and, owing to this cause and the barbarous character of the times, it was never generally observed. The Councils of Orange, A. D. 441, of Orleans, A. D. 511, of Arles, A. D. 541, of Maçon, A. D. 586, of Rheims, A. D. 630, of Toledo, A. D. 681, etc., severally vindicated this right, and extended protection even to the grossest offenders; and the less efficient sovereigns acquiesced in their decisions. Charlemagne himself fully confirmed these privileges.<sup>7</sup> They were now extended to the churchyard and burial-ground, and to the bishop's house; and then again to the chapels, to crucifixes when brought by the priest to the sick; and even to the parsonage.<sup>8</sup> The right was also claimed for cloisters, though it was not often exercised. The synod of Nemours, A. D. 1284, confirmed the privilege even on public inns for strangers, and religious establishments generally. The right was also claimed for the residence of the Roman cardinal, who also was the first to assume the inviolable rights of a public ambassador, *jus asyli legatorum*. This, it is well known, has been the subject of much controversy, and, as late as the last half of the eighteenth century, was asserted as an important political privilege.

To what extent the privileges above mentioned were abused, is evident from the fact, that Innocent III. and Gregory IX. were compelled to make public proclamation that the church should offer no refuge to murderers and highway robbers.<sup>9</sup> And the Council of Cologne decreed, A. D. 1280, that criminals should only find refuge in the church until due deliberation should be had whether they should be subjected to punishment or receive pardon.

In the Eastern empire, the right in question was the subject of

similar controversy and abuse. The famous Tarasius, Patriarch of Constantinople in the eighth century, was a zealous defender of this right. By a decree of the emperor, it was denied to murderers, robbers, and adulterers;<sup>10</sup> but Theophilus granted this right in favour of his daughter's grave to all offenders. It is remarkable, that even the Turks recognised and respected the sacred privileges of the sanctuary. Since the Reformation, these have been abrogated in all evangelical churches, and in many Catholic countries they have either been wholly abolished or greatly modified.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### OF RELIGIOUS WORSHIP.

#### § 1. OF PRIMITIVE WORSHIP.

THE first converts to Christianity continued for some time to frequent the synagogue of the Jews, and to unite with them in their worship. In their own religious assemblies they observed the devotional exercises of the synagogue. These were prayer, singing, the reading of the Scriptures, and occasional remarks and exhortations connected with those portions of the Scriptures which had been read. Whenever the apostles met with their Christian converts for religious worship, whether in private families, or in more public assemblies, both the record of their acts and their own epistles indicate all the informality, freedom, and simplicity of social worship. Subsequent to the age of the apostles, for two or three centuries, it is remarkable that the notices on record respecting the worship of the primitive Christians are few and indefinite.

From Pliny's letter, already cited, it appears that the Bithynian Christians, at the beginning of the second century, continued to observe the same rites of worship as the first Christians. Psalmody, the worship of Christ, efforts to discountenance sin, and to celebrate the Christian graces, are particularly specified, together with their sacred supper.

Lucian, in the middle of the second century, makes mention, in the passage already cited, of the worship of Christ, the reading of the Sacred Scriptures, and their sacred supper. Both of these profane authors have left on record enough to indicate that the simplicity of primitive worship remained at the distance of one hundred years from the apostles.

Among apostolical fathers the reputed epistles of Ignatius are of no account. Clement, Polycarp, Hermas, Barnabas give us no information respecting their rites of worship. Nor from Christian writers have we any information on this subject until the age of

Justin Martyn, contemporary with Lucian, in the middle of the second century. This father has incidentally given two accounts of the religious worship of the primitive Christians—one on the occasion of baptism; the other, that of the customary mode of worship on the Sabbath—which are here transcribed at length.

“As many as are persuaded and believe that the things which we teach and declare are true, and promise that they are determined to live accordingly, are taught to pray to God, and to beseech him with fasting to grant them remission for their past sins, while we also pray and fast with them. We then lead them to a place where there is water, and then they are regenerated, in the same manner as we also were; for they are then washed in that water in the name of God, the Father and Lord of the universe, and of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit.”

“We then, having so washed [*i. e.* baptized] him who hath expressed his conviction and professed the faith, lead him to those who are called brethren, where they are gathered together to make common prayers with great earnestness, both for themselves and for him who is now enlightened, and for all others in all places; that having learned the truth, we may be deemed worthy to be found men of godly conversation in our lives, and to keep the commandments, that so we may attain to eternal salvation. When we have finished our prayers, we salute one another with a kiss; after which there is brought to that one of the brethren who presides, bread and a cup of wine mixed with water. And he, having mixed them, gives praise and glory to the Father of all things, through the name of the Son and the Holy Spirit, and gives thanks in many words for that God hath vouchsafed to them those things. And when he hath finished his praises and thanksgivings, all the people who are present express their assent, saying, Amen, which in the Hebrew language means, So be it. The president having given thanks, and the people having given their assent, those whom we call deacons give to each of those who are present a portion of the bread which has been blessed, and of the wine mixed with water, and send some away to those who are absent.

“On the day which is called Sunday, there is an assembly in one place of all who dwell either in towns or in the country, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as the time permits. Then, when the reader has ceased, the president delivers a discourse, in which he reminds and exhorts them to the imitation of all these good things. We then

all stand up together, and offer up our prayers. Then, as we have already said, when we cease from prayer, bread is brought, and wine and water; and the president, in like manner, offers up prayers and praises, *according to his ability*, and the people express their assent by saying, Amen. The consecrated elements are then distributed and received by every one; and a portion is sent by the deacons to those who are absent."<sup>1</sup>

In the comparison of these paragraphs, one cannot fail to notice the free spirit of the primitive worship with circumstantial variations. We here notice, for the first time, the blessing in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; water in connection with the wine of the eucharist—the use of which afterward became common—is here for the first time mentioned. Justin is the first to style the sacrament an *offering*, in allusion to the sacramental offerings of the Jews, and the distribution of the elements by the deacons to the absent communicants.

The order and mode of worship at the baptismal service differs in several particulars from that on the Sabbath. The reading of the Scriptures and the corresponding exhortation are omitted in the baptismal service; the subjects of the prayers have all the variety and contrast of occasional, extemporaneous prayer. Could any one without prejudice or bias in favour of a liturgy ever imagine that those occasional prayers offered by the suppliant, *according to the best of his ability*, were rehearsed from a prayer book, or according to any set form?

The whole controversy here turns on the interpretation of Justin's words, where he says that the president prays ὅση δύναμις αὐτῷ. That this phrase indicates the free, spontaneous suggestions of his own mind, has been unanswerably shown by Chancellor King and by Clarkson, with which references we shall dismiss the subject after a brief citation from the author's "Apostolical and Primitive Church," where the forms of prayer are considered more in detail.

With regard to Justin's meaning, in the passage under consideration, let it be compared with the following citations from the same Apology by Justin Martyr:—

"We, who worship the Ruler of the universe, are not atheists. We affirm, as we are taught, that he has no need of blood, libations, and incense. But, with supplication and thanksgivings, we praise him according to our ability, ὅση δύναμις, for all which we enjoy, ἐφ' ὅς προσφερόμεθα πᾶσιν, having learned that, worthily to honour him is not to consume in fire by sacrifice what he has



provided for our sustenance, but to bestow it upon ourselves and upon the needy, to show ourselves by invocations and hymns thankful to him for our birth, our health, and all that he has made, and for the vicissitudes of the season.”<sup>2</sup>

The Catholic and Episcopal rendering of this passage makes the author say that, in *all our offerings*, ἐφ’ οἷς προσφερόμεθα πᾶσιν, we praise him, ὅση δύναμις, with the utmost fervency of devotion. This, however, is a mistaken rendering of the verb, προσφέρομαι, which, in the *middle voice*, means not to offer in sacrifice, or to worship, but to *participate*, to *enjoy*. So it is rendered by Scapula, Hedericus, Bretschneider, Passow, etc. The passage relates, not to an act of sacrifice, nor of *public worship*, as the connection shows, but to deeds of piety toward God, and of benevolence to men, done according to their ability; by which means they offered the best refutation of the groundless calumnies of their enemies, who had charged them with an atheistical neglect of the gods. The declaration is, that for all their blessings they express, *according to their ability*, thanksgivings to God, and testify their gratitude by deeds of charity to their fellow-men.

“Having, therefore, exhorted you, ὅση δύναμις, *according to our ability*, both by reason and by a visible sign or figure, we know that we shall henceforth be blameless if you do not believe, for *we have done what we could for your conversion*.”<sup>3</sup> He had done what he could: by various efforts of argument and exhortation, and by visible signs he had laboured according to his ability to bring them to receive the truth. The exhortation was the free expression of his heart’s desire for their conversion. Can there be any doubt that the phrase denotes the same freedom of expression in prayer? These passages appear to us clearly to illustrate the meaning of the phrase in question, as used by our author, and to justify our interpretation.<sup>4</sup>

If one desires further satisfaction on this point, he has only to turn to the works of Origen, in which this and similar forms of expression are continually occurring, to denote the invention, ability, and powers of the mind. Origen, in his reply to the calumnies of Celsus, proposes to refute them, “according to his ability.”\* In his preface he has apologized for the Christians “as well as he could.”† These Christians sought “as much as possible” to pre-

\* Ὅση δύναμις, lib. 6, § ii. vol. ii. p. 694; so, also, κατὰ τὸ δύνατον, § 12, p. 638.

† Κατὰ τὴν παροῦσαν δύναμιν, Præf. lib. Contr. Cels.

serve the purity of the church.\* They strove to discover the hidden meaning of God's word, "according to the best of their abilities."† In these instances the reference is not to the fervour of the spirits, or the ardour of the mind, but to the exercise of the mental powers. The act performed is done according to the ingenuity, the talents of the agents in each case.

From Irenæus and Tertullian we derive no additional information respecting the religious worship of the primitive Christians; but Tertullian, at the close of the second century, briefly describes the worship of the African church:—"We meet in public assembly to pray for the emperor, for his ministers, for the public welfare, for universal peace, and the delay of the end of the world, *pro mora finis*. We meet to read the Sacred Records, and, as circumstances may require, to stir up our minds by way of remembrance or admonition; especially by the Sacred Scriptures, we confirm our faith, we quicken our hope, we establish our confidence, and, by renewed application, encourage ourselves to keep the Divine law. In the same assemblies we offer also admonitions, we institute examinations, and administer the *Divine censure*, [the religious discipline of the church;] for with great caution such examinations are made, as though under the eye of God, and in view of the future judgment, whether any one has so offended as to require him to be excluded from the fellowship of our prayers, from our public assemblies, and from all communion within sacred things. Certain elders preside who have obtained this honour, not by purchase, but by the testimony of their lives." Tertullian then explains what provisions are made by charitable collections for orphan children, for the poor, the aged, the afflicted, and the persecuted, as specified above, p. 74; he describes the mutual affection of the brethren and their community of goods, and the purity and simplicity of their love-feasts; and, in this connection, gives us a further insight into their mode of religious worship. "No one takes his seat at the table until prayer has been offered to God. They eat only sufficient to satisfy their hunger, and drink enough to slake their thirst. They partake of these provisions in remembrance that God is to be honoured by night as well as by day, and converse as in the audience of God.

\* "Ὁση δύναμις, *Contr. Cels.* lib. 3, vol. ii. p. 482.

† Lib. 6, § 2, p. 630. Comp. in *Comment. in Math.* ὁση δύναμις, tom. 17, vol. iii. p. 809; κατὰ τὸ δύναντον, tom. 16, vol. iii. p. 785; κατὰ δύναντον, tom. 17, vol. iii. p. 779, vol. iv. p. 6; κατὰ τὴν παροῦσαν δύναμιν, tom. 17, vol. iii. p. 794; also CLARKSON'S *Discourse on Liturgies*, pp. 247-374, Select Works, London, 1846.

After this, lights are brought in, and water for the hands ; then any one present is requested to sing a song to God, either from the Sacred Scriptures or *from the suggestions of his own mind, de proprio ingenio*. After this the festival is concluded by prayer."

Here, at the end of the second century, we recognise still the mutual fellowship and communion of the first converts to Christianity, perpetuated by the same familiar rites of sacred worship—prayer, the reading of the Scriptures, mutual exhortation and encouragement in their religious life, psalms and spiritual songs. On another occasion he informs us, that as in this instance, the Christians sometimes began their religious assemblies before nightfall, and continued them into the evening ; in other instances they assembled at the dawn of day for social worship.

The testimony of Tertullian is opposed to the theory of a liturgical form of worship in the primitive worship. "We Christians pray," he says, "*without a monitor, because from the heart,*" *sine monitore quia de pectore*.

Much ingenuity has been employed to reconcile this expression with the use of a prayer-book ; but, viewed in connection with the freedom and simplicity in which worship was at that time conducted, its real import is sufficiently obvious. He justifies, indeed, the use of the Lord's prayer, but seems to intimate that to God alone belongs the right of prescribing forms of prayer. "God alone," says he, "can teach us how he would be addressed in prayer." But he adds, "Our Lord, who foresaw the necessities of men, after he had delivered this form of prayer, said, 'Ask, and ye shall receive ;' and there are some things which need to be asked, *according to every one's circumstances* ; the rightful and ordinary being first used as a foundation, we may lawfully add other occasional desires, and make this the basis of other petitions."<sup>5</sup>

The writings of Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Minucius Felix, and Cyprian, and even the voluminous works of Origen and Eusebius, afford little additional information respecting the forms of worship that prevailed in the second and third centuries. They indicate no essential departure from the simplicity of primitive worship. They give no intimation of any liturgical forms of prayer for Christians, with the exception of the Lord's prayer, and this, as may appear under another head, was not a prescribed liturgical form, but an example of the appropriate *spirit* and *subjects* of prayer, however and by whomsoever offered.

We will only add, on this subject, that the attitude of the primi-

tive Christians forbids the supposition that they used written prayers. The attitude of the suppliant was with eyes uplifted and hands outspread,\* or kneeling with head inclined and eyes closed, to shut out from the mind every disturbing object, or, as Origen expresses it, "closing the eyes of his senses, but erecting those of his mind."

We are far from affirming that the free, familiar, confiding spirit of the early Christians is utterly inconsistent with the use of a liturgy; but surely such a spirit does find utterance rather in the unstudied suggestions of the occasion than in the frigid, formal dictations of a prayer-book. When we take into consideration, also, the customary attitude for prayer, in connection with the absence of all historical evidence of a liturgy previous to the third century, we must conclude that it was unknown in the church previous to that period.

## § 2. OF THE SECRET DISCIPLINE OF THE ANCIENT CHURCH.

### DISCIPLINA ARCANI.

IN an historical survey of the rites of public worship observed by the primitive Christians, we arrive at a period, antecedent to the use of a liturgy, when an important change was introduced into their public worship by the division of it into parts or lessons, known subsequently as the *missa catechumenorum* and the *missa fidelium*—the *mass*, or service, for the catechumens and for the faithful, the baptized or believers. The origin of this innovation and the causes which gave rise to it are involved in great obscurity, and have been the subject of much controversy. Christianity in the beginning confessedly had no mysteries to conceal, or none which, with "prudent reserve," should be withheld from the ignorant, the irreligious, the uninitiated. Nothing like this secret discipline, which reserved certain topics of religion exclusively for baptized believers, and excluded all others, was known in the age of the apostles, or that which immediately followed. But it became customary at an early period to celebrate the ordinances of religion with an air of profound mystery. The church became a *secret society*, whose rites, in connection with certain doctrines, were concealed with the strictest caution from the uninitiated.

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\* Illuc sursum suspicientes Christiani manibus expansis, quia innocuis, capite nudo, quia non erubescimus; denique sine monitore, quia de pectore oramus.

Not only were unbelievers of every kind excluded from them, but even candidates for admission to the church were kept in profound ignorance of the peculiar ordinances and doctrines of the church. These were themes upon which the private professor and the public teacher were strictly forbidden to touch. Not a hint was allowed to be given nor a whisper breathed on these topics. Even the preacher, when led in public discourse to speak of the sacraments and of the higher doctrines of the Christian system, contented himself with remote allusions, and dismissed the subject by saying, *The initiated understand me—ἴσασιν οἱ μεμνημένοι*. The fathers never allowed themselves to write on these mysteries, except in enigmatical and figurative expression, lest they should seem, in their own phraseology, to be giving that which is holy unto dogs, or casting pearls before swine.

Neither the apostolical fathers nor their immediate successors make any allusion to this secret discipline. Tertullian is supposed to refer to it in the passage cited in the margin. He reflects severely upon the irregularities of certain heretics. "No one knows who is a catechumen; who a believer. They all come and hear and pray alike; and even if the heathen chance to come in, they give that which is holy unto dogs, and cast their pearls, such as they are, before swine."\* He proceeds to complain that even the women venture to assume the sacred functions of the ministry, and that they observe no order in their ecclesiastical appointments, so that "the same one is to-day a bishop; to-morrow, something else; one day a presbyter; another, a layman." From this connection, the inference is that Tertullian has reference to these disorders, rather than to any improper attendance upon forbidden mysteries. It would seem, however, that about the beginning of the third century, the churches of Africa began to attach a mysterious solemnity to the distinguishing doctrines and rites of the Christian religion, and to withdraw them from the notice of the irreligious and unbelieving. Neander supposes this mysticism to have had its origin in the Alexandrian church. The theology of Clement and Origen, of this church, was deeply tinged with it. From the African churches, this secret discipline spread to those of the East and the West, and was gradually developed in the course of the third century, and matured in the fourth. Mosheim, in his Commentaries, has sketched, with

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\* Imprimis quis catechumenus, quis fidelis, incertum est. Pariter adeunt. pariter audiunt, pariter orant; etiam ethnici si supervenerint, sanctum canibus, et porcis margaritas, licet non veras, jactabunt.—*De Præscrip.* c. 41.



his usual candour and clearness, the various phases of this delusion in the progress of its development. The result of his researches on this recondite subject are given in detail, from the recent translation by Dr. Murdock:—

“That the more learned of the Christians, subsequently to the second century, cultivated, in secret, an abstruse discipline of a different nature from that which they taught publicly, is well known to every one. Concerning the argument, however, or matter of this secret or mysterious discipline, its origin, and the causes which gave rise to it, there are infinite disputes. But these contentions, as is commonly the case among mortals, instead of elucidating, have rather tended to throw additional obscurity over a thing of itself sufficiently intricate, and that seems, as it were, to have set illustration at defiance. This has more particularly been the case since the advocates for the papacy have endeavoured to avail themselves of this secret discipline of the ancient Christians in support of their cause. To me, it appears that this obscurity might be in part removed, if due attention were paid to a circumstance which seems to have been hitherto commonly overlooked, namely, that among the ancient Christians there existed not merely one, but several species of secret discipline, which were, indeed, of some affinity to each other, but between which it is necessary in regard to this question to draw a line of distinction, in order to prevent our confounding together things in themselves really different.

“In the *first place*, there was a sort of secret or mysterious discipline that related to those who were enemies to the Christian religion and worshippers of false gods; but even this was of more than one kind. For, *first*, there was a sort of discipline of this nature that respected all who were adverse to the Christian faith generally and without distinction. There were certain points of belief, for instance, at this time current among the Christians respecting the destruction that hung over the city of Rome and the empire, as well as the wars and final discomfiture of Antichrist, the near approach of the end of the world, the millennium, and other matters, peradventure, connected with these. Now if things of this kind had been promulgated without reserve among the multitude, there can be no doubt but that a very considerable degree of enmity and ill-will would have been excited in the minds of the Roman people toward the Christians. Great care was therefore taken to conceal every thing of this nature from all except comparatively a few, of whose fidelity and secrecy there could be no apprehension.

“Another species of secret discipline had relation to those whom the Christians were desirous of rescuing from the dominion of superstition and initiating in the principles of Christianity. With these they found it necessary to proceed somewhat cautiously, lest, by a premature communication of the truth, their minds might receive impressions unfavourable to the Christian religion. They, therefore, observed at first a total silence with regard to the doctrine contained in the Scripture respecting the person, merits, and functions of Christ; as well as those other mysteries, to the right comprehending of which the human mind is of itself unequal, and confined them wholly to such things as right reason points out concerning the Deity, the nature of man, and his duties. When these had been sufficiently inculcated and suitably received, and not before, they proceeded to points of a higher and more abstruse nature. Respecting the practice of the early Christians in regard to this, the reader will find a notable passage in the Apostolical Constitutions.

“These Constitutions direct a widow, when she is questioned on the subject of religion, to reply in respect to whatever may tend to prevent error. ‘Let her answer only so as may tend to subvert the error of polytheism and demonstrate the doctrine concerning the monarchy of God. But of the remaining doctrines let her not answer any thing rashly, lest, by saying any thing unlearnedly, she should cause the word to be blasphemed. For the Lord has taught us that the word is like a *grain of mustard seed*, Matt. xiii. 31, which is of a fiery nature, and, if any one useth it unskillfully, he will find it bitter. For in the mystical points we ought not to be rash, but cautious. For the Lord exhorteth us, saying, *Cast not your pearls before swine, lest they trample them with their feet, and turn again and rend you.* For unbelievers, when they hear the doctrine concerning Christ not explained as it ought to be, but defectively, and especially that concerning his incarnation or his passion, will rather reject it with scorn, and laugh at it as false, than praise God for it.’

“Entirely distinct from these, there existed another species of secret discipline, which regarded Christians alone, and had respect, in part, to the *catechumens*, or those who had not as yet been received into the church, and, in part, to the regular members of the church. This discipline, so far as it regarded the catechumens, is sufficiently known. The catechumens were not admitted either to the common prayers or to a sight of the celebration of the sacred

rites ordained by Christ, or to what were termed the feasts of love; nor were they at all instructed as to the nature of these parts of Divine worship, or any of the injunctions or regulations appertaining to them, until they had been regularly adopted as members of the church by baptism; and, consistently with this, the sacred preachers made it a rule to abstain from entering into any discussions immediately relating either to baptism or the Lord's supper, in presence of the catechumens. But this kind of discipline had certainly in it somewhat of an alien cast, and betrayed an imitation of foreign manners and customs but little laudable.

"Of a much more praiseworthy nature was the practice of consulting the furtherance and advantage of weak and illiterate Christians, by directing the teachers to accommodate their discourses to the capacities of their hearers, and in popular addresses to omit all such things as were not, without difficulty, to be comprehended by persons of low and simple minds. Instructions to this effect are to be found in Origen, *contra Celsum*, lib. iii. p. 143, edit. Spencer, as well as in other Christian writers. Undoubtedly, nothing can be more commendable and wise than to avoid troubling weak and simple minds with things, to the right comprehension of which an ordinary degree of intelligence is by no means equal.

"In addition to all these different species of secret discipline, which had relation to particular classes of men, and were regulated by certain modes and times, there remains still yet another to be mentioned, of a nature altogether different, being controlled neither by time nor place, and having respect to no class of men in particular, but, with few exceptions, equally regarding all, as well Christians as those who were strangers to the Christian faith. This, without question, consisted of divers maxims and opinions which were cherished by the Christian teachers in private among themselves, and never communicated to the people at large, or even to their own immediate disciples indiscriminately, but only in secret to such of these latter as had given satisfactory proofs of their trustworthiness and taciturnity. Clement of Alexandria is the first writer that notices this sort of discipline; before him, no mention whatever is made of it by any author. There can, therefore, be but little doubt that it originated among the Christians of Egypt, and was by them communicated to the other churches. Clement represents this secret discipline, to which he gives the title of *γνώσις*, as having been instituted by Christ himself. Nor does he discover the least hesitation in asserting, with the Gnostics, that

the discipline communicated by our blessed Saviour to mankind was of a twofold nature, the one calculated for the world at large, the other designed only for the wise and prudent; the former consisting of what was taught publicly to the people by Christ himself, and is to be found in the Scriptures; the latter, of certain maxims and precepts that were communicated merely by word of mouth to a few only of the disciples.

“What Clement says of the *Divine origin* of this discipline is, unquestionably, a mere fiction, devised either by him or some other admirer of philosophy, with a view to silence the importunate remonstrances of those friends to Christian simplicity who, mindful of St. Paul’s injunction, were continually protesting against any attempt to blend philosophy with the religion of the gospel. To Clement such sanctified deceptions and pious inventions appeared not at all unwarrantable; indeed, there can be no doubt, that they were countenanced by all such of the Christian teachers as were of the Egyptian or modern Platonic school. In reality, there can be no doubt that Clement, and most probably also his masters, whose authority he frequently adduces, learned the mode of blending philosophy with religion from Philo; and the secret discipline, or the practice of cautiously concealing their philosophical explications of the Scriptures and the principles of Christianity, from the Egyptians as well as from Philo. The thing, in fact, is not altogether dissembled by Clement, who frequently compares his secret discipline with the heathen mysteries and the interior and recondite wisdom of the philosophers, and defends it by a reference to both of these.”

The same author subjoins the following extract as an example of the pompous strain in which Philo was accustomed to descant upon the sublime mysteries of the church:—“Having then, O ye initiated! through the channel of purified organs, acquired a knowledge of these things, let them sink deep into your minds as holy mysteries, not to be revealed to the profane. Bury them within your bosoms, and preserve them as a treasure; a treasure consisting, not of corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but of the fairest and most valuable portion of true wealth, namely, a knowledge of God and of virtue, and of the offspring that is generated of them both. Whenever ye chance to meet with any one else of the initiated, beseech him with the most earnest entreaties not to conceal from you any mystery that he may have more recently discovered,



and leave him not until you shall have obtained from him the most intimate insight into it."

"Philo, without doubt, imitated the Egyptians; Clement, as unquestionably, followed the example of Philo; and Origen trod clearly in the footsteps of both. The more recent Christian teachers, for the most part, formed themselves upon the model of this latter father. The secret discipline of Philo consisted in the application of philosophic principles to religion and the sacred writings; nor was that of Clement ever thought to differ from it, except by those who had not sufficiently informed themselves on the subject. The reader will understand me, in what I have said above, as not meaning to attribute the absolute invention of this discipline to Philo; for we know that long before his time it had been the practice of several Jews to expound and illustrate Moses from the writings of Plato and other Greek philosophers; but of this, I think, there can be no doubt, that Clement and the other Egyptian teachers by whom this discipline was first introduced into the Christian church, were indebted for their acquaintance with it entirely to Philo. Wonderful, indeed, is it to contemplate the influence and authority which this Alexandrian Jew had at one time acquired among the Christians."

The subjects which were shrouded in such mystery, were—

1. The manner of administering baptism.
2. The manner of administering unction or confirmation.
3. Ordination.
4. The public prayers of the church.
5. The manner of celebrating the Lord's supper.
6. The creed.
7. The Lord's prayer; and
8. The mystery of the Trinity.\*

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\* The following citations will illustrate the usage of the church respecting these mysteries. The fourth council of Carthage, A. D. 398, c. 84, decreed that until the dismissal of the catechumens, no one, whether Jew or Gentile or heretic, should be excluded from the church.

Quid est, quod occultum est et non publicum in ecclesia? sacramentum baptismi, sacramentum eucharistiæ. Opera nostra bona vident pagani, sacramenta vero occultantur illis.—*AUGUST. Expos. in Ps.* 103 s. 1. (Opp. t. iv. p. 855.) Μὴ δὲ τὰς χειροτονίας ἐπὶ παρουσίᾳ ἀκροαμένων γίνεσθαι.—*Conc. Laod.* c. 5. Μέλλων χειροτονεῖν καὶ τὰς ἐκείνων εὐχὰς καλεῖ τότε, καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐπιψηφίζονται, καὶ ἐπιβοῶσιν ἅπερ ἴσασιν μεμνημένοι· οὐ γὰρ δὴ δέμης ἐπὶ τῶν ἀμνητῶν ἐκκαλύπτειν ἅπαντα.—*CHRYSOSTOM. h.* 18, in 2 Cor.

Ταῦτα τὰ μυστήρια, ἃ νῦν ἡ ἐκκλησία διηγεῖται σοι τῷ ἐκ καθηγουμένων μεταβαλ-



Bingham supposes that the reasons for this mysterious concealment were, that the plainness and simplicity of the religious rites of the church might not give needless offence. It was often objected to the Christians that they had no temples nor altars, no impressive rites. They accordingly withdrew their rites from public view as much as possible.

Many of the tenets of the church, like that of the Trinity and the incarnation of the Son of God, might have been concealed because very obnoxious to the enemies of religion.

This mystery quickened the curiosity of the inquirer also, as man is ever curious to pry into forbidden secrets.

It was a part of that long process of preparation by which candidates for admission to the church gradually attained to this degree of advancement, styled by them *τελετήν*—*perfection*—the perfection of mysteries.

Many pagans in the age of Constantine pressed into the church with all their partialities for their Eleusinian mysteries. For admission to these, a certain preparatory probation was requisite. The admission was solemnized by imposing formalities, and it was the height of impiety to disclose any of those hidden mysteries.\* So the Constitutions direct that if one, by any means, has been an observer of the Christian mysteries, he should be immediately received into the church, that he may thus be laid under bans not to divulge the secret. No one can fail to notice the analogy between these profane mysteries and those mysterious solemnities of the church which were connected with her secret discipline.

λομένω, οὐκ ἔστιν ἔδος ἔθνηκοῖς διηγείσθαι. οὐ γὰρ ἔθνηκ' τὰ περὶ πατρὸς καὶ υἱοῦ καὶ ἁγίου πνεύματος διηγούμεθα μυστήρια. οὐδὲ τὰ περὶ τῶν μυστηρίων ἐπὶ κατηχουμένων λευκῶς λαλοῦμεν, ἀλλὰ πολλὰ πολλάκις λέγομεν ἐπικεκαλυμμένως, ἵνα οἱ εἰδότες πιστοὶ νοήσωσι, καὶ οἱ μὴ εἰδότες μὴ βλαβῶσι.—CYRILL. Hieros. Catech. 6, § 29. Βούλομαι σαφῶς τοῦτο εἰπεῖν, οὐ τολμῶ δὲ διὰ τοὺς ἀμνήτους· οὔτοι γὰρ δυσκολώτερον ἡμῖν ποιοῦσι τὴν ἐξήγησιν, ἀνοητάζοντες, ἢ μὴ λέγειν σαφῶς, ἢ εἰς αὐτοὺς ἐκφέρειν τὰ ἀπόρρητα.—CHRYSOSTOM. hom. 40, in 1 Cor. Ἰσασιν οἱ μεμνημένοι τοῦ ποτηρίου τούτου τὴν ἰσχύν. εἴσεσθε δὲ καὶ ὑμεῖς μικρὸν ὕστερον.—Catech. i. ad illuminand. (t. ii. p. 226.) Ἀσῆμως διὰ τοὺς ἀμνήτους περὶ τῶν θείων διαλεγόμεθα μυστηρίων, τούτων δὲ χωριζομένων, σαφῶς τοὺς μεμνημένους διδάσκωμεν.—THEODORET. quaest. in Num. 15, (Opp. t. i.) Nunc de mysteriis dicere tempus admonet, atque ipsam sacramentorum rationem edere, quam ante baptismum si putassemus insinuantiam nondum initiatis, prodidisse potius quam edidisse aestimaremur.—AMBROSIUS, *De Mysteriis*, c. 1.

\* Vetabo, qui cereris sacrum

Vulgarit arcanae, sub iisdem

Sit trabibus, fragilemque mecum

Solvat phaselum.

The clergy also favoured this system as a means of self-aggrandizement. Ever watchful to promote the dignity and influence of their order, they readily saw the advantage to be gained by making themselves the ministers of mysterious rites, to be essayed only by consecrated hands, and the guardians and instructors of ordinances and doctrines too sacred for vulgar minds.

How long this system was continued is not known. Cyril of Jerusalem, Gregory Nazian, Basil, Chrysostom, Augustine, and the fathers of the fourth and fifth century, make frequent mention of it; but it disappears from the writings of authors in the eastern churches after the sixth century. Cardinal Bona has shown that the catechetical system was discontinued in the western churches about the year 700; and with this doubtless ceased this secret discipline. *Cessante causa, cessat effectus.*

The influence of the system under consideration was decidedly injurious to the church, in corrupting the simplicity and purity of its worship. Indeed, it had no small influence in introducing the corruptions and formalities which subsequently dishonoured the Christian church. It gave a mysterious importance to the rites of baptism and the Lord's supper. The doctrine of the efficacy of baptism to wash away all sin, of the grace communicated in the sacramental supper, and of actual presence in the bread and wine, are supposed by some to have had their origin in these mysteries.<sup>1</sup>

### § 3. OF LITURGIES.

1. *Liturgies unknown to the Primitive Churches.*—Much learning and historical research have been expended in a vain attempt to trace the use of liturgy far back to the earliest ages of the primitive church, and even to wrest the usage and authority of the apostles into an argument for the use of a prescribed form of prayer; but in addition to what has already been said respecting the spirit and manner of primitive worship, and the attitude of the worshippers as incompatible with the use of a prayer-book, the survey of the religious rites as described in the preceding article, may fairly be alleged as an argument against the early use of a liturgy. Prematurely to disclose these mysteries, even to Christians themselves, directly or indirectly, was *sacrilege*.\* *Procul! oh, procul este profani!* was the stern and sanctimonious cry of the Christian, in

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\* Ὅσον γὰρ ἡ ἱεροσυνλία κακὴν, οὐδέ ἐστιν εἰπεῖν.—CHRYSOSTOM, in *Tim.* ii.

imitation of the pagan priest; neither would commit their mysteries to writing. Basil the Great, when writing a confidential letter to his friend Meletius, would not venture to *write* on this awful subject, but refers him to Theophrastus, a friend, for a verbal explanation.<sup>1</sup> What they might not explain, they feared to commit to writing.\* Basil, in justification of his extreme caution, appealed to the famous maxim of Origen, "Mysteries must not be committed to writing."

2. *Silence of the ancients respecting them.*—The profound silence, both of friends and enemies, in the early ages of the church, respecting liturgies and forms of prayer, is urged as a valid argument against the liturgical worship of the primitive church. Socrates relates that Macarius, a disorderly presbyter in Egypt, A. D. 332, leaped upon the altar, overturned the table, broke the mystical cup, and burned the sacred books—*τὰ ἱερὰ βιβλία*—the Bible.<sup>2</sup> About the same time Gorgius, an Arian bishop who succeeded Athanasius, entered a church by force, and offered indignities to the holy table, the sacred volumes of the Scriptures—*τὰς θείας τῶν γραφῶν βιβλους*—the Bible, the holy font, the wine, the oil, the doors, the latticed partitions on the chancel, the candlesticks, the tapers. In this minute enumeration, no mention is made of the *prayer-book*, which, if such there had been, must more than all else have inflamed the exterminating zeal of this Arian bishop against his orthodox predecessor.

3. *Not included in the sacred books of Christians.*—In the relentless and bloody persecution of Diocletian, A. D. 303, Christians under pain of death were, by the edict of the Emperor, required to deliver up the Bible and their sacred books to be burned. Magistrates were required to enter churches and private houses in an exterminating search for these books; many were brought forth and burned; many Christians, known as *traditores*, under the form of these terrible trials, gave up their books, but many more suffered torture and death in steadfast refusal of obedience to the decree. But in all the records of this terrible persecution, though the Scriptures and other books of the Christians are mentioned, no intimation is given of a liturgy or prayer-book, as either discovered, delivered up, or concealed and withheld. The inference is, that nothing of the kind was at this time known or preserved among the sacred books of these persecuted Christians.

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\* Φοβούμενος γράψαι ἃ καὶ λέγειν ἱφύλαξάμην.—CLERM. *Aber. Strom.* ii.

4. *Providential omissions.*—Indeed, Archbishop Whately regards the omission of all liturgical forms in the Scriptures, as a miraculous intervention to save the church from the superstitious adherence to which men are so much inclined.

“No such thing is to be found in our Scriptures as a catechism, or regular *elementary introduction* to the Christian religion; neither do they furnish us with any thing of the nature of a systematic creed, set of articles, confession of faith, or by whatever other name one may designate a regular, complete compendium of Christian doctrines; *nor again, do they supply us with a liturgy for ordinary public worship, or with forms for administering the sacraments, or for conferring holy orders*; nor do they even give any precise *directions* as to these and other ecclesiastical matters;—any thing that at all corresponds to a rubric or set of canons.

“Now these omissions present a complete moral demonstration that the apostles and their followers must have been *supernaturally withheld* from recording a great part of the institutions and regulations, which must, in point of fact, have proceeded from them; withheld *on purpose* that other churches, in other ages and regions, might not be led to consider themselves bound to adhere to certain formularies, customs, and rules, that were of local and temporary appointment; but might be left to their own discretion in matters in which it seemed best to Divine wisdom that they should be so left.”<sup>3</sup>

No form of prayer, liturgy, or ritual, was recorded or preserved by the cotemporaries, inspired or uninspired, of the apostles, or by their immediate successors.

This consideration is nearly allied to the former, and is so forcibly urged by Archbishop Whately, that we shall again present the argument in his own words:—“It was, indeed, not at all to be expected that the Gospels, the Acts, and those Epistles which have come down to us, should have been, considering the circumstances in which they were written, any thing different from what they are: but the question still recurs, why should not the apostles or their followers have also committed to paper, what, we are sure, must have been perpetually in their mouths, regular instructions to catechumens, articles of faith, prayers, and directions as to public worship, and administration of the sacraments? Why did none of them record any of the prayers, of which they must have heard so many from an apostle’s mouth, both in the ordinary devotional assemblies, in the administration of the sacraments, and in the ‘laying on of hands,’ by which they themselves had been ordained?”<sup>4</sup>



“Such a systematic course of instruction, carrying with it Divine authority, would have superseded the framing of any *others*—nay, would have made even the alteration of a single word, of what would on this supposition have been Scripture, appear an improper presumption. . . . So that there would have been an almost inevitable danger, that such an authoritative list of credenda would have been regarded by a large proportion of Christians with a blind, unthinking reverence, which would have exerted no influence on the character. They would have had a form of godliness; but, denying the power thereof, the form itself would have remained with them only the corpse of a departed religion.”<sup>5</sup>

The superstitious reverence of the early Christians, for such productions as had been obtained from the apostles and their cotemporaries, is apparent from the numerous forgeries of epistles, liturgies, etc., which were published under their name. Had any genuine liturgies of the apostolical churches been written, it is inconceivable that they should all have been lost, and such miserable forgeries as those of James, Peter, Andrew, and Mark, have been substituted in their place. Some discoveries must have been made of these among other religious books and sacred things of the Christians, which in times of persecution were diligently sought out and burned. Strict inquiry was made after such, and their sacred books, and sacramental utensils, their cups, lamps, torches, vestments, and other apparatus of the church were often delivered up, and burnt or destroyed. But there is no instance on record of any form of prayer, liturgy, or book of Divine service having been discovered in the early persecutions of the church. This fact is so extraordinary, that Bingham, who earnestly contends for the use of liturgies from the beginning, is constrained to admit, that they could not have been committed to writing in the early periods of the church, but must have been preserved by oral tradition, and used “*by memory*, and made familiar by known and constant practice.” The reader has his alternative between this supposition and that of no liturgy, or prescribed form of prayer in those days of primitive simplicity. Constantine took special care to have fifty copies of the Bible prepared for the use of the churches of Constantinople, and by a royal commission, entrusted Eusebius, the historian, with the duty of procuring them.<sup>6</sup> How is it, that the service book was entirely omitted in this provision for the worship of God? Plainly because they then used none.

5. *Traditions of the churches.*—The strong propensity of the



church to such superstitious adherence to apostolical precedents, is manifest in the extreme care with which the ancient Christians affected to transmit the unrecorded traditions of the apostles. The Jews before them had made the Scriptures of none effect by their traditions. They had traditions which they held sacred as a revelation fresh from heaven, and by which they totally annulled what heaven had actually revealed. So the Christians had their traditions, which they transmitted with the utmost care, and often appealed to them as authority for usages about which the written revelations of God are silent. Tertullian specifies many ceremonies connected with baptism and the Lord's supper, for which he claims no scriptural authority, but tradition; such as renouncing the devil and his pomp and his angels, various responses, trine immersion, the mingling of milk and honey with the wine, offerings for the dead, commemoration of martyrs, refusing to fast or bend the knee on the Lord's day and on Whitsunday, the extreme care of the communicants that no particle of the sacred elements be lost, and the sign of the cross, used on all occasions. After this enumeration he adds, "If for these and similar rites you seek for the authority of Scripture, you will find none; tradition is the sole authority: confirmed by custom, the observance becomes a rule of faith.\*

Basil the Great, in answer to the inquiry, who has left any written directions respecting the use of the form of invocation in the blessing of the elements, replies that nothing is recorded respecting it, and proceeds to say, "We do not content ourselves with the instructions of the apostle or of the gospel, but we premise and subjoin other things as of great force in this solemnity, which have been received from unrecorded instructions."†

6. *Gradual formation of liturgies.*—Böhmer cites this passage as shedding light upon the darkness that overshadows the origin of liturgies. The apostles of the Gentiles, he supposes, would naturally organize the churches which they might form of converts from paganism, after the general pattern of the church at Jerusalem, and yet the forms and ceremonies would be more or less modified

\* Harum et aliarum ejusmodi disciplinarum, si leges expostules Scripturarum, nullam invenies; traditio tibi prætenditur auctrix; consuetudo, confirmatrix; fides, observatrix.—TERTULL. *De Coron.* c. 4.

† Οὐ τοῦτοις ἀρκούμεθα ὡν ὁ ἀπόστολος ἡ ἐδαγγέλιον ἐπεμήσθη, ἀλλὰ καὶ προλεγόμεν καὶ ἐπιλέγομεν ἕτερα, ὡς μεγάλην ἔχοντα πρὸς τὸ μυστήριον τὴν ἰσχύιν, ἐκ τῆς ἱεράου διδασκαλίας παραλαβόντες.—Ep. 27, *De Spirit. Sancti*.

according to the circumstances of the people, and peculiar mental habits of the apostle or evangelist by whom the church was founded. In this manner a general agreement would prevail in all the churches in connection with minor diversities. The rites and ceremonies of the original organization would at first be perpetuated by tradition, and by degrees be committed to writing.

The modifications and additions, which from time to time each church should make, would be gradually blended with the original draft, and soon come under the fictitious sanction of apostolical authority.

7. *Arbitrary forms of written prayers.*—It is conceded that when first bishops began to substitute written for oral prayers, each was at liberty to indite his own. It was only necessary that he should write his prayers as one writes his sermons for delivery; and these prayers might naturally be incorporated with the ritual of religious worship.

Such is a brief outline of the theory which has been proposed to account for the gradual substitution of a liturgical form of worship for the free and informal worship of the primitive church. But whatever may have been the origin of liturgies, to claim for them the authority of the apostles, and the usage of the apostolical churches, is altogether an unauthorized assumption.

8. *Model of ancient liturgies.*—The most ancient liturgy extant is that of the Apostolical Constitutions, which is of no higher antiquity than the third or fourth century. From this the ancient liturgies, both of the Eastern and Western churches, may have been formed as early as the fifth. This is the highest antiquity which Palmer claims for them,<sup>7</sup> and the utmost that even the credulity of the Oxford Tractarians ventures to claim in favour of their antiquity, is, that one, (that of Basil,) may be traced with tolerable certainty to the fourth century, and three others to the middle of the fifth century.<sup>8</sup>

9. *Number and diversity.*—The number and diversity of the ancient liturgies plainly indicate that the ancient churches were continually tampering with their rituals as with their creeds, and that they were far from regarding them as some sacred thing on which none must lay a rude and sacrilegious hand. We have the liturgy of Antioch, of Basil, of Chrysostom, of Alexandria, of Rome, of Milan, of Africa, of Gaul, of Spain, of Ephesus, &c. &c.

10. *Comparative summary.*—The Oxford liturgists have made a

comparative summary of these liturgies or services, which were appointed to be used at the celebration of the Lord's supper, and which they find to have resembled one another in the following points:—

"1. All of them direct that, previous to communion, those who intend to communicate shall exchange 'the kiss of peace.'

"2. In all of them, the more particularly solemn part of the service commences with words exactly answering to the English, 'Lift up your hearts,' &c., as far as 'Holy Father, almighty, everlasting God.'

"3. All contain the hymn, 'Therefore with angels and arch-angels,' &c., with very trifling varieties of expression.

"4. Also, they all contain a prayer, answering in substance to ours, 'for the whole state of Christ's church militant.'

"5. And, likewise, another prayer, (which has been excluded from the English ritual,) 'for the rest and peace of all those who have departed this life in God's faith and fear;' concluding with a prayer for communion with them.

"6. Also, a commemoration of our Lord's words and actions in the institution of the eucharist, which is the same, almost word for word, in every liturgy, but is not taken from any of the four Scripture accounts.

"7. A sacrificial oblation of the eucharistic bread and wine.

"8. A prayer of consecration, that 'God will make the bread and wine the body and blood of Christ.'

"9. Directions to the priest for breaking the consecrated bread.

"10. The Lord's prayer.

"11. Communion.

"These parts are always arranged in one of the four following orders:—

*Roman Liturgy.*

1. Lift up your hearts, &c.
2. Therefore with angels, &c.
3. Prayers for the church on earth.
4. Consecration prayer.
5. Commemoration of our Lord's words.
6. The oblation.
7. Prayers for the dead.
8. Breaking of bread.
9. The Lord's prayer.
10. The kiss of peace.
11. Communion.

*Oriental Liturgy.*

10. The kiss of peace.
1. Lift up your hearts, &c.
2. Therefore with angels.
5. Commemoration of our Lord's words.
6. The oblation.
4. Consecration prayer.
3. Prayers for the church on earth.
7. Prayers for the dead.
9. The Lord's prayer.
8. Breaking of bread.
11. Communion.

*Alexandrian Liturgy.*

10. The kiss of peace.
1. Lift up your hearts, &c.
3. Prayers for the church on earth.
7. Prayers for the dead.
2. Therefore with angels, &c.
5. Commemoration of our Lord's words.
6. The oblation.
4. Consecration prayer.
8. Breaking of bread.
9. The Lord's prayer.
11. Communion.

*Gallican Liturgy.*

3. Prayers for the church on earth.
7. Prayers for the dead.
10. The kiss of peace.
1. Lift up your hearts, &c.
2. Therefore with angels, &c.
5. Commemoration of our Lord's words.
6. The oblation.
4. Consecration prayer.
8. Breaking of bread.
9. The Lord's prayer.
11. Communion.

"Thus it appears, that the four original forms, from which all the liturgies in the world have been taken, resemble one another too much to have grown up independently, and too little to have been copied from one another. They were probably all constructed upon the basis of the form prescribed in the Apostolical Constitutions; or, at all events, were composed in conformity with some model of the third or fourth century. The prayers for the dead, which they all contain, are unscriptural, and, therefore, unwarranted and vain; some expressions in the consecration of the elements are obvious departures from primitive doctrine; and the appropriation of false titles, introduced after the composition and use of the forms themselves, is as plainly opposed to Christian simplicity and truth. But, together with these defects, we recognise in these ancient formularies much that is truly pious and devotional."<sup>9</sup>

## § 4. OF ANCIENT CREEDS.

1. *Their antiquity and use.*—The confession of faith belonged in the ancient church to the ceremonials of baptism, but the creed having become a part of the ritual of public worship in modern liturgies, it may with propriety be classed among the several parts of public worship.

Some confession of faith appears to have been required from the earliest institution of the church, as a condition of baptism and membership with the church. The confession was, in the age of the apostles, apparently very brief and simple, consisting merely in a general profession of faith in Christ, upon which, without further probation or trial, converts to Christ under the preaching of the apostles, appear to have been baptized. "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of

God." On this confession of faith the Ethiopian eunuch was baptized. Acts viii. 36-38. Some other traces of a confession of faith which was made at baptism, Neander supposes to be found, 1 Pet. iii. 21; to which Guericke adds 1 Tim. iii. 16, and vi. 12.

In process of time these confessions were drawn out far more in detail, and especially such articles were introduced as were most directly opposed to the prevailing errors of the times among Jews, pagans, and heretics, rather than such as might comprise the most important doctrines of the Christian religion. This *polemic* character of the ancient creeds is worthy of special notice, in order to a right understanding and just appreciation of them. By a confession framed in direct opposition to the errors of the age, the weak in faith were to be fortified against heresy and defection. It was, also, a compend of the articles of revealed faith, to guide both believers and unbelievers in their examination of the word of God. Some by this, without the Scriptures, were first made acquainted with the doctrines of the Christian religion. To the believer, it was at the same time the *symbol* of his profession, like the article of agreement or bond that binds one to the fulfilment of the conditions of a voluntary compact. Such appear to have been the uses and intents of the confession of faith in the ancient church.

2. *Meaning of symbols.*—The meaning of the word *symbol* has been the subject of much discussion. Neander understands it to mean "a sign," a mark, token, or evidence, and in proof of this interpretation refers to Tertullian, who first uses the word in this sense, when he says that baptism, which by its nature should be a *symbol of life, symbolum vitæ*, becomes, to those who receive it without a right disposition, a *symbol of death, symbolum mortis*.<sup>1</sup> He refers to Firmilian also, who uses the term to designate, not the confession of faith, but *the formula of baptism*,\* and adds, "Perhaps this word was originally nothing more than a designation of the formula of baptism, and became subsequently transferred to the confession of faith." The definition of Rufinus, of the fourth century, and Maximus Taurinensis of the fifth, are given in the margin.† "By *symbols*, in the doctrinal sense of the word, but neither in its

\* Baptismus cui nec symbolum trinitatis, nec interrogatio legitima et ecclesiastica deficit.

† Symbolum—græce indicium dici potest et collatio.—RUFIN. in *Sym. Apost. Cyr. Opp. Ap.* p. 198.

Symbolum tessera est et signaculum, quo inter fideles perfidosque secernitur.—MAX. TAUR. *Hom. in Symb.* p. 239.



liturgical nor technical sense, we understand," says Hagenbach, "the public confessions of faith, by which those belonging to the same section of the church recognise each other, as soldiers by the watchword, *tessera militaris*." <sup>2</sup>

Bingham has, with his usual diligence and learning, made a large collection of the most ancient creeds and confessions of faith extant, which Riddle has transcribed, with some modifications. From these creeds the following are selected. The earliest is that of Irenæus, A. D. 180, the disciple of Polycarp, the disciple of John :—

3. *Creed of Irenæus*.—"The church, though it be dispersed over all the world from one end of the earth to the other, has received from the apostles and their disciples the belief in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and all things in them; and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who was incarnate for our salvation; and in the Holy Ghost, who preached by the prophets the dispensations of God and the advent, (τὰς ἐλεύσεις, *adventum*, *Int. vet.*) nativity of a virgin, passion, resurrection from the dead, and bodily ascension into heaven of the flesh of his beloved Son, Christ Jesus, our Lord, and his coming again from heaven in the glory of the Father, to restore (ανακεφαλαιώσασθαι, *ad recapitulanda universa*, *Int. vet.*) all things, and raise the flesh of all mankind; that according to the will of the invisible Father, every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in the earth, and things under the earth, to Jesus Christ, our Lord, and God, and Saviour, and King; and that every tongue should confess to him; and that he may exercise just judgment upon all, and may send spiritual wickedness, and the transgressing and apostate angels, with all ungodly, unrighteous, lawless, and blaspheming men, into everlasting fire; but having granted life to all righteous and holy men, that keep his commandments and persevere in his love, some from the beginning, others after repentance, on these he may bestow the gift of immortality, and invest them with eternal glory."\*

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\* Ἡ μὲν ἐκκλησία, καίπερ καθ' ὅλης τῆς οἰκουμένης ἕως πρῶτων τῆς γῆς διεσπαρμένη, παρὰ δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ τῶν ἐκείνων μαθητῶν παραλαβοῦσα τὴν εἰς ἓνα Θεὸν πατέρα παντοκράτορα, τὸν πεποιηκότα τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν καὶ τὰς θαλάσσας, καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς, πίστιν καὶ εἰς ἓνα Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν, τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, τὸν σαρκωθέντα ὑπὲρ τῆς ἡμετέρας σωτηρίας καὶ εἰς Πνεῦμα ἅγιον, τὸ διὰ τῶν προφητῶν κεκηρυχὸς τὰς οἰκονομίας, καὶ τὰς ἐλεύσεις, καὶ τὴν ἐκ παρθένου γέννησιν, καὶ τὸ πάθος, καὶ τὴν ἔγερσιν ἐκ νεκρῶν, καὶ τὴν ἔνσαρκον εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς ἀνάληψιν τοῦ ἡγαπημένου Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν, καὶ τὴν ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν ἐντῇ δόξῃ τοῦ Πατρὸς παρουσίαν αὐτοῦ, ἐπὶ τὸ ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι τὰ πάντα, καὶ ἀναστῆσαι πᾶσαν σάρκα πάσης ἀνθρώπου

4. *Creed of Tertullian*, A. D. 200.—Three several descriptions of the rule of faith are found in the writings of this author. They are as follows:—

“There is one rule of faith only, which admits of no change or alteration,—that which teaches us to believe in one God Almighty, the Maker of the world; and in Jesus Christ his Son, who was born of the Virgin Mary, crucified under Pontius Pilate, the third day rose from the dead, received into heaven, and sitteth now at the right hand of God by the resurrection of the flesh.”\*

“The rule of faith is, that whereby we believe one God only and no other besides, the Maker of the world, who produced all things out of nothing, by his Word, which he sent forth before all things. This word was called his Son, who at sundry times appeared to the patriarchs, and always spake by the prophets, and at last descended into the Virgin Mary by the power and Spirit of God the Father, and was made flesh in her womb, and born of her, a man, Jesus Christ; who preached a new law, and a new promise of the kingdom of heaven; who wrought miracles, and was crucified, and the third day rose again, and was taken into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; whence he sent the power of the Holy Ghost in his stead, to guide them that believe: who shall come again with glory, to take the saints into the possession and fruition of eternal life and the heavenly promises, and to condemn the pro-

πότῃτος, ἵνα Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦ τῷ Κυρίῳ ἡμῶν, καὶ Θεῷ, καὶ σωτῆρι, καὶ βασιλεῖ, κατὰ τὴν εἰδοκίαν τοῦ Πατρὸς τοῦ ἀοράτου, πᾶν γόνυ κάμψῃ ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθονίων, καὶ πᾶσα γλῶσσα ἐξομολογήσεται αὐτῷ, καὶ κρίσιν δικαίαν ἐν τοῖς πᾶσι ποιήσεται, τὰ μὲν πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας, καὶ ἀγγέλους τοὺς παραβεβηκότας, καὶ ἐν ἀποστασίᾳ γεγονότας, καὶ τοὺς ἀσεβεῖς, καὶ ἀδίκους, καὶ ἀνόμους, καὶ βλασφήμες τῶν ἀνδρώπων εἰς τὸ αἰῶνιον πῦρ πέμψῃ, τοῖς δὲ δικαίοις, καὶ δόλοις, καὶ τὰς ἐντολάς αὐτοῦ τετηρηκόσι, καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ αὐτοῦ διαμεμενηκόσι, τοῖς ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, τοῖς δὲ ἐκ μετανοίας, ζῶνι χαρισάμενος, ἀφθαρσίαν δωρήσεται, καὶ δόξαν αἰῶνιον περιποίησιν.—IREN. lib. i. c. 2.

Credo in unum Deum, fabricatorum cœli ac terræ et omnium quæ in eis sunt, per Christum Jesum Dei Filium, qui propter eminentissimam erga figmentum suum dilectionem, eam quæ esset ex Virgine generationem sustinuit, ipse per se hominem adunans Deo, et passus sub Pontio Pilato, et resurgens, et in claritate receptus, in gloria venturus Salvator eorum qui salvantur, et Judex eorum qui judicantur, et mittens in ignem æternum transfiguratores veritatis, et contemplores Patris sui, et adventus ejus.—IREN. lib. iii. c. 4.

\* Regula fidei una omnino est, sola immobilis et irreformabilis, credendi scilicet in unicum Deum omnipotentem, mundi conditorem, et filium ejus Jesum Christum, natum ex Virgine Maria, crucifixum sub Pontio Pilato, tertio die resuscitatum ■ mortuis, receptum in cœlis, sedentem nunc ad dextram Patris, venturum judicare vivos et mortuos per carnis etiam resurrectionem.—TERTULL. *de Veland. Virgin.*

fane to everlasting fire, having first raised both the one and the other, by the resurrection of the flesh.”\*

“We believe in one God, but under this dispensation which we call the economy, that that one God hath a Son, which is his Word, who proceeded from him, by whom all things were made, and without whom nothing was made. We believe that he was sent by the Father to be born of a Virgin, both man and God, the Son of man and the Son of God, and that was called Jesus Christ. That he suffered, and was dead and buried, according to the Scriptures; that he was raised again by the Father, and taken up again into heaven, where he sits at the right hand of the Father; and shall come again to judge the quick and the dead; from whence, also, he sent from his Father, according to his promise, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, who sanctifies the faith of those who believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”†

5. *Creed of Origen*, A. D. 230.—“The things which are manifestly handed down by the apostolical preaching are these:—First, that there is one God, who created and made all things, and caused the whole universe to exist out of nothing; the God of all the just that ever were from the first creation and foundation of all; the God of Adam, Abel, Seth, Enos, Enoch, Noe, Sem, Abraham,

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\* Regula est autem fidei, ut jam hinc quid credamus, profiteatur, illa scilicet, qua creditur unum omnino Deum esse, nec alium præter mundi creatorem, qui universum de nihilo produxerit per verbum suum, primum omnium amissum; id verbum filium ejus appellatum in nomine Dei, varie visum patriarchis, in prophetis semper auditum, postremo delatum ex Spiritu Patris Dei et virtute in Virginem Mariam, carnem factum in utero ejus, et ex ea natum, egisse Jesum Christum, exinde prodicasse novam legem et novam promissionem regni cœlorum, virtutes fecisse, fixum cruci tertia die resurrexisse, in cœlos ereptum, sedere ad dextram Patris, misisse vicariam vim Spiritus Sancti, qui credentes agant, venturum cum claritate ad sumendos sanctos in vitæ æternæ et promissorum cœlestium fructum, et ad profanos judicandos igni perpetuo, facta utriusque partis resurrectione cum carnis restitutione. Hæc regula a Christo—instituta nullas habet apud nos quæstiones, nisi quas hæreses enferunt, et quæ hæreticos faciunt. —TERTULL. *De Præscript. ad Hæret.*

† Unicum quidem Deum credimus, sub hac tamen dispensatione quam *οἰκονομία* dicimus, ut unci Dei sit et Filius sermo ipsius, qui ex ipso processerit, per quem omnia facta sunt, et sine quo factum est nihil, hunc missum a Patre in Virginem, et ex ea natum hominem et Deum, filium hominis et filium Dei, et cognominatum Jesum Christum, hunc passum, hunc mortuum et sepultum secundum Scripturas, et resuscitatum a Patre, et in cœlo resumptum, sedere ad dextram Patris, venturum judicare vivos et mortuos, qui exinde miserat secundum promissionem suam a Patre Spiritum Sanctum, Sanctum Paracletum, sanctificatorem fidei eorum qui credunt in Patrem, et Filium, et Spiritum Sanctum.—TERTULL. *adv. Præeam.*

Isaac, Jacob, the twelve patriarchs, Moses, and the prophets; and this God, in the last days, as he had promised before by his prophets, sent our Lord Jesus Christ, first to call Israel, and then the Gentiles, after the infidelity of his people Israel. This just and good God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, gave both the law and the prophets, and the gospels, being the God of the apostles, and of the Old and New Testament." The next article is, "That Jesus Christ, who came into the world, was begotten of the Father before every creature, who, ministering to his Father in the creation of all things, (for by him all things were made,) in the last times made himself of no reputation, and became man; he who was God was made flesh, and when he was man, he continued the same God that he was before. He assumed a body in all things like ours, save only that it was born of a virgin by the Holy Ghost. And because this Jesus Christ was born and suffered death common to all, in truth, and not in appearance, he was truly dead; for he rose again truly from the dead, and after his resurrection conversed with his disciples, and was taken up into heaven. They also delivered unto us that the Holy Ghost was joined in the same honour and dignity with the Father and the Son." And he adds some observations concerning the immortality of the soul, future rewards and punishments, and the resurrection of the dead. The entire passage is transcribed in the note.\*

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\* *Unus Deus est, qui omnia creavit atque composuit, quique ex nullis fecit esse universa, Deus a prima creatura et conditione mundi, omnium justorum, Adam, Abel, Seth, Enos, etc. Et quod hic Deus in novissimis diebus, sicut per prophetas suos ante promiserat, misit dominum nostrum, Jesum Christum, primo quidem vocaturum Israel, secundo vero etiam gentes post perfidiam populi Israel. Hic Deus justus et bonus Pater Domini nostri Jesu Christi, legem et prophetas et evangelia ipse dedit, qui et apostolorum Deus est, et veteris et novi Testamenti. Tum diende quia Jesus Christus ipse qui venit, ante omnem creaturam natus ex Patre est: qui cum in omnium conditione Patri ministrasset, (per ipsum enim omnia facta sunt,) novissimis temporibus seipsum exinaniens homo factus est, incarnatus est cum Deus esset, et homo mansit quod Deus erat. Corpus assumpsit corpori nostro simile, eo solo differens quod natum ex Virgine et Spiritu Sancto est, et quoniam hic Jesus Christus natus et passus est in veritate, et non per imaginem, communem hanc mortem, vere mortuus est: vere enim a morte resurrexit, et post resurrectionem conversatus cum discipulis suis assumptus est.*

*Tum deinde honore ac dignitate Patri ac Filio sociatum tradiderunt Spiritum Sanctum, in hoc non jam manifeste discernitur, utrum natus an innatus. Sed inquirenda jam ista pro viribus sunt de sacra scriptura, et sagaci perquisitione investiganda, sane quod iste Spiritus Sanctus unumquemque sanctorum vel prophetarum vel apostolorum inspiravit, et non alius spiritus in veteribus, alius vero in his, qui in adventu Christi inspirati sunt, manifestissime in ecclesiis prædi-*



6. *Creed of the Apostolical Constitutions*.—"I believe in, and am baptized into, one unbegotten, the only true God Almighty, the Father of Christ, the Creator and Maker of all things, of whom are all things: and in one Lord Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, the first born of every creature; who, before all ages was begotten, not made, by the good will of the Father; by whom all things were made in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible; who in the last times came down from heaven, and taking flesh upon him, was born of the holy Virgin Mary, and lived a holy life according to the laws of God his Father, and was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and died for us; and the third day, after he had suffered, rose again from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and shall come again with glory in the end of the world, to judge both the quick and the dead, of whose kingdom there shall be no end. And I am baptized into the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, who wrought effectually in all the saints from the beginning of the world, and was afterward sent to the apostles by the Father, according to the promise of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and after the apostles, to all others, who in the holy catholic church believe in the resurrection of the flesh, the remission of sins, the kingdom of heaven, and the life of the world to come." It is observable, that the title "unbegotten" is carefully restricted to God the Father; the author of the *Constitutions* elsewhere appropriately styles the Son "the only begotten God."

7. *Nicene Creed*, A. D. 325. 1. *As it was first published by the Council of Nicæa*, A. D. 325.—"We believe in one God Almighty, Maker of all things, visible and invisible. And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, the only begotten, that is, of the substance of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made; of one substance with

catur. Post hæc jam, quod anima substantiam, vitamque habens propriam, cum ex hoc mundo discesserit, et pro suis meritis dispensabit, sive vitæ æternæ ac beatudinis hereditate potitura, si hoc ei sua gesta præstiterint; sive igne æterno atque suppliciis mancipanda, si in hoc eam scelerum culpa detorserit. Sed et quia erit tempus resurrectionis mortuorum, cum corpus hoc quod in corruptione seminatur, surget in corruptione, et quod seminatur in ignominia, surget in gloria.—ORIGEN, in Præm. lib. *De Principiis*. To this may be added, πιστεύουν ὅτι εἰς ἐστὶν ὁ θεός, ὁ τὰ πάντα κτίσας καὶ καταρτίσας, καὶ ποιήσας ἐκ τοῦ μη ὄντος εἰς τὸ εἶναι τὰ πάντα, καὶ ἡμεῖς δὲ καὶ πιστεύειν ὅτι Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός καὶ πάση τῇ περὶ αὐτοῦ κατὰ τὴν θεότητα καὶ ἀνθρωπότητα ἀληθείᾳ· δεῖ καὶ εἰς τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα πιστεύειν, καὶ ὅτι αὐτεξούσιοι ὄντες κολαζόμεθα μὲν ἐφ' οἷς ἀμαρτάνομεν τιμώμεθα δὲ ἐφ' οἷς εὐπράττομεν.—ORIGEN, *Comment. in Johan.*



the Father; by whom all things both in heaven and earth were made; who for us men and our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate, and made man, and suffered, and the third day rose again, and ascended into heaven, and shall come again to judge the quick and the dead. And in the Holy Ghost. As for those who say there was a time when the Son of God was not, or that he did not exist before he was made, or that he was made out of nothing, or of another substance or essence, or that he is created or mutable, the catholic and apostolic church anathematizes them.”\*

2. *As completed by the second general Council of Constantinople, A. D. 381.*—The Council of Nicæa rehearsed and expounded only so much of the former creeds as bore upon the questions then in debate, in connection with Arian doctrines; “leaving the rest,” says Bingham, “to be supplied from the former creeds then generally received by the church.” The creed which received the sanction of the Second General Council of Constantinople, was the same as the Nicene, with the addition of such other articles as were always used by the church in the interrogatories of baptism, and is as follows:—“We believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God; begotten of his Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made; being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who, for us men and our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried, and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end. And we believe in

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\* Πιστεύομεν εἰς ἕνα θεόν, πατέρα παντοκράτορα, πάντων ὁρατῶν τε καὶ ἀορατῶν ποιητήν. Καὶ εἰς ἕνα κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ γεννηθέντα ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς, μονογενῆ· τοῦτ' ἔστιν, ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ Πατρὸς, θεὸν ἐκ θεοῦ καὶ ὧς ἐκ φωτός, θεὸν ἀληθινὸν ἐκ θεοῦ ἀληθινοῦ· γεννηθέντα οὐ ποιηθέντα, ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρί· δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα ἐγένετο, τὰ τε ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ καὶ τὰ ἐν τῇ γῇ. Τὸν δι' ἡμᾶς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους καὶ διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν κατελθόντα, καὶ σαρκωθέντα, καὶ ἐνανθρωπήσαντα, παθόντα, καὶ ἀναστάντα τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ, ἀνελθόντα εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς, ἐρχόμενον κρίναι ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς. Καὶ εἰς τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα. Τοὺς δὲ λέγοντας, ὅτι ἦν ποτὲ ὅτε οὐκ ἦν· καὶ πρὶν γεννηθῆναι οὐκ ἦν· καὶ ὅτι ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων ἐγένετο· ἢ ἐξ ἑτέρας ὑποστάσεως ἢ οὐσίας φάσκοντας εἶναι· ἢ κτιστὸν, ἢ τρεπτὸν, ἢ ἄλλοις τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ· ἀναθεματίζει ἡ ἁγία καθολικὴ καὶ ἀποστολικὴ ἐκκλησία.

the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of life; who proceedeth from the Father; who, with the Father and Son together, is worshipped and glorified; who spake by the prophets. And we believe one catholic and apostolic church; we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins, and we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come." This is the confession of faith which has been admitted into the liturgy, under the name of the Nicene creed, but with the addition of "and the Son," after the words "who proceedeth from the Father;" an addition made by the Latin church. The first copies of this creed, in the Council of Constantinople and the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, have only the words "proceeding from the Father," (*ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον*;) without any mention of the Son; but in the Latin councils, the word "*Filioque*" is added, as in the first Council of Bracara, (A. D. 411,) and the third Council of Toledo, (A. D. 589,) where the Nicæo-Constantinopolitan creed is recited.

The Nicene creed was generally used by the Eastern churches in the administration of baptism, from the time of its publication. It was inserted in the daily service of the oriental churches about the middle of the fifth century. It appears to have been partially introduced into the daily service of the Western churches about the latter end of the sixth century; but this use of it was not fully admitted into the Roman church until the year 1014; when, to use the words of Lupus quoted by Bingham, the Roman church, since she could not bring over the French and Spanish churches to her own way, resolved at last to comply with their custom, that there might be no disagreement between them.

8. *The Apostles' Creed*.—This, which has been adopted by the Protestant Episcopal Church, and is found in every prayer-book, need not be transcribed in this place, but the origin and authorship of it is worthy of consideration.

Prelatical and popish superstition ascribes the authorship of this ancient confession of faith to the apostles themselves. It is even said that each of the twelve furnished an article—that of Peter being, "I believe in God, the Father Almighty;" that of John, "Maker of heaven and earth," etc. This legend, however, transcends the credulity of the most confiding superstition, and is now generally rejected, even by those who still receive with profound veneration the tradition of the church. It exceeds in absurdity that monstrous figment of prelatical pride and ghostly superstition, the doctrine of the apostolical succession.

Others again attempt to trace the Apostles' Creed up to the high antiquity of the second century. It will be observed, that earlier creeds already cited, express the doctrinal sentiments of this creed, with the exception of the "descent into hell," "the communion of saints," and "the life everlasting." Bingham has instituted a careful collation of this with the preceding creeds, and with ancient authors, to prove its high antiquity, but he has the candour to admit, in conclusion, that none of them "speaks home to the purpose" except Rufinus. Even this author only "speaks home to the purpose," by relating the fabulous tradition already mentioned. Rufinus lived in the last half of the fourth century; previous to which time, we have no satisfactory evidence of the existence of the Apostles' Creed.

In the secret discipline of the church, the custom was to conceal its creed as much as possible, not only from the heathen, but even from the candidates for baptism themselves, until the administration of this ordinance. For this reason Christians were required not to commit their creed to writing—or, in their phraseology, "not to permit vile paper to depreciate this precious gift, or black ink to darken this mystery of light," but to preserve it in the most inward recesses of their hearts. In consequence of this extraordinary secrecy, it is extremely difficult to ascertain from ancient history the real origin and authorship of this Apostles' Creed. Chancellor King, in his history of it, sums up the result of his researches respecting it as follows:—"As for the authors thereof, it cannot be denied but that they were several and many. The creed was neither the work of one man, nor of one day, but during a long tract of time passed successively through hands, ere it arrived at its present perfection. The composition of it was gradual, and not instantaneous."

The several articles of the creed he shows at great length, from ancient writers, to have been framed from time to time, against the prevalent tenets of the numberless heretical sects, which disturbed the peace and marred the purity of the church—so that, "although nothing that is contained therein must be believed any further than it agrees with the Holy Scriptures, yet the intended sense of a great part thereof is not to be fetched from them, but from the writings of the fathers, and from those heresies against which it was designed."

We have already noticed the polemic character of these ancient creeds, which appear to have been subject to continual change, ad-

ditions, amendments, and substitutions, to oppose the ever varying forms of heresy, that came in like the frogs of Egypt to molest and defile the church of Christ. Socrates gives a particular account of three several creeds which were put forth under Constantius in a little more than twenty years. Evidently the repetitions of this creed were inserted in opposition to the innovating humour of the Arians and other errorists of the day.

The name of the Apostles' Creed, like that of the Apostolical Canons and Constitutions, was evidently a pious fraud, to give authority to this ancient summary of Christian faith. Clarkson, on liturgies, affirms that no creed was put into set form until the fourth century, or near it; and that "those forms varied in several places in the same country." He further asserts, that no creed had any place in the church service until near the sixth century, but was used only "in baptisms, or in order to it, until late."

From Theodore Lector, who flourished in the forepart of the sixth century, we learn that the creed was first introduced into the church service by Peter the Fuller, of Antioch, a man of fickle mind and worthless character, who died A. D. 486. "This Peter," says Evagrius, the ancient historian, A. D. 594, "never abided by one opinion, being a double-dealer and a time-server."

Timotheus, Bishop of Constantinople, A. D. 511-17, a flagitious person and a heretic, introduced the creed into the service of that church to vindicate his orthodoxy, "whereas previously it was said only once a year—the time the bishops were engaged in catechising." The creed, which now began to find a place in the ritual of the Eastern church, was not, however, that of the apostles, but of the Council of Nice or Constantinople.

Near the end of the sixth century the same creed was introduced into the liturgical service of the Western church. The Council of Agde, A. D. 506, decreed that on the Lord's day before Easter, the creed should be publicly preached to those who were about to receive baptism. Eighty years afterward, the third Council of Toledo ordered that the creed of the Council of Constantinople should be used throughout all the churches of Spain and Gallicia, "according to the manner of the Eastern churches."

Into France and Germany the use of the same creed was introduced in the eighth century, under Charlemagne.

The Apostles' Creed became the creed of Rome; and from this source, together with many other articles of the Roman ritual, was adopted into the liturgy of the church of England. When it first



found a place in the Roman liturgy, does not appear. That church appears first to have appropriated to this creed exclusively the name and authority of the apostles. The creeds of Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, and the Apostolical Constitutions might with greater propriety claim this venerable appellation. But that crafty deceiver of Rome may have given to the creed its venerable title, to impress the church with the belief, that in the recital of it, they are declaring their faith in the very words which were dictated by the holy apostles, and dwelt on the lips of the earliest disciples of the Redeemer. This creed, however, has no claim to antiquity, authority, or veneration, above other symbols of the ancient church. It is not even a fair summary of revealed truth, condensed and carefully adjusted, but a crude assemblage of certain articles of the faith of the early Christians, set forth in opposition to the obsolete heresies of those distant ages. The great doctrine of the atonement is only indirectly implied in this creed, while the death of Christ, in denial of errors which passed away with the age that gave them birth, is minutely detailed: *Suffered under Pontius Pilate—was crucified—dead and buried.* The descent into hell, in the common acceptance of the term, is not a doctrine of revelation. What is its real meaning, is still an unsettled question, even among those who every Sabbath-day stand up together in the great congregation, and reverently repeat it as an article of their faith!

#### § 5. OF THE CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTIONS.<sup>1</sup>

“AT the beginning, when it was important that the church should rapidly extend itself, those who confessed their belief in *Jesus* as the *Messiah*, (among the Jews,) or their belief in one God, and in *Jesus* as the *Messiah*, (among the Gentiles,) were immediately baptized, as appears from the New Testament. Gradually it came to be thought necessary that those who wished to be received into the Christian church should be subjected to a more careful preparatory instruction and to a stricter examination. This whole class were denominated *κατηχούμενοι, ἀκροαταί, auditores* or *audientes*. By these appellations they were designated as those who were receiving their first instruction in Christianity, and who could only be permitted to hear the reading of the Scriptures and the preaching of the word.”

No very clear distinction can be drawn between the homilies and catechetical lessons of the fathers. The terms are applied inter-



changeably, in some instances, to the same productions. The catechetical lessons were familiar instructions given to candidates for baptism, or to persons who had just received that ordinance; and varied very much according to the age, character, and circumstances of the catechumens. Sometimes they were of a doctrinal, and at others of a practical character; and again, they were adapted more especially to the young; just as the instructions of the missionary are necessarily qualified by the circumstances of the people to whom he goes, or the particular class whom he may chance to address. But in either case they are strictly catechetical.

The nature of these instructions in the ancient church was greatly modified by the general introduction of infant baptism, in consequence of the corresponding change of the relations and institutions which attended this change in the ordinance. For it must be remembered that such addresses were delivered, at first, chiefly to persons of full age, previous to their admission to the church by baptism. They are, therefore, not to be brought into comparison with catechisms of the present day, provided for the use of children. They were familiar instructions, doctrinal and practical, like those which the modern missionary gives to converts from paganism.

The catechetical discourses of Cyril of Jerusalem, bearing date, A. D. 334-349, contain the most ancient and authentic summary of this class of instructions. These the catechumens were expected to commit to memory, and habitually to study as a compend of the Scriptures, and a substitute for them, to such as had not a Bible. Such was also the nature and intent of all subsequent formularies of this kind. They have a close analogy to the ancient symbols of the church, and were in many respects the same.

The principal points of catechetical instruction, even when no catechism in form was used, were

1. *The Decalogue*.—The fathers in the church unitedly agreed in regarding this as essentially a summary of the Old Testament, and obligatory upon Christians. They were accordingly diligently taught this compend of the moral law. Pliny, in his famous epistle, has clearly declared how faithfully the primitive Christians observed this law, and the same is known from many authorities.<sup>2</sup>

Many of the fathers disagreed in the division of the law of the two tables, some making ten, others seven, etc. In regard to their different views, see references.<sup>3</sup>

2. *The Symbols, or Confessions of Faith*, particularly that which

is styled the *Apostles' Creed*, after the adoption of this famous symbol by the ancient church. But the completion of it in its present form, dates back only to the fifth or sixth century.<sup>4</sup>

3. *The Lord's Prayer* comprised a part of the catechetical instructions. This was used in baptism, and, after Gregory the Great, at the sacrament of the Lord's supper. It was regarded as a summary of the proper topics of prayer.

4. While the secret mysteries of the church were continued, instructions respecting the sacrament could not have been publicly given. But from the time when the prevalence of infant baptism changed the style of catechetical instructions, they must have included the subjects of baptism, absolution, and the Lord's supper.

## CHAPTER XV.

### OF THE PRAYERS OF THE ANCIENT CHURCH.

#### § 1. OF EXTEMPORE PRAYER.

“THE Christian church, unlike the Jewish,” says Neander, “was far from restricting prayer to certain stated times, as though there were any merit in these carnal ordinances. It regarded prayer as a quickening spirit, drawing forth the inward aspirations of the soul after God. The entire life of the Christian should be sanctified by prayer; and life should be but a continued prayer of thanksgiving for saving grace and supplication for increasing sanctification.” Origen, A. D. 235, speaks also of the life of the Christian as one prolonged prayer, and each act of devotion as only a part of this prayer. Some, says Clement of Alexandria, half of a century earlier, contend for prayer at stated times, but the mature Christian prays always; through all his life striving thus for closer communion with God. So Cyprian also contends, that the Christian should, day and night, without ceasing, pray and give thanks to God.

The primitive Christians contended earnestly against all prescribed attitudes and forms in prayer, and directed their attention only to the state of the heart, as the requisite qualification for offering our prayers acceptably to God. Origen directs the suppliant, first of all, to collect his thoughts and turn them inward on himself, to impress on his mind a sense of the majesty of God and of his own sins, and to lift up unto God his heart rather than his hands; his mind rather than his eyes. He then proceeds to say, that of all attitudes, that is to be preferred in which the eyes are upraised and the hands outstretched, as an emblem of the proper state of the mind in prayer; but he adds, that other attitudes may be equally acceptable and becoming in certain circumstances.

“God,” says Tertullian, in opposition to those whose voice was too loud in prayer, “God listens not to the sound of the voice, but

to the utterance of the heart, for he looketh upon the heart." Against those who laid undue stress upon the washing of the hands before prayer he says, "Of what avail is it to come before the Lord with clean hands and an impure heart. True purity consists in no outward rites, which many are so careful to observe, reference being had to superstitions which Jewish and pagan converts had transferred to the Christian religion. Our hands," he adds, "are sufficiently clean, since the whole body has once for all been washed in Christ."

Tertullian then proceeds to censure other vain superstitions, which, like these, are neither authorized by Christ himself, nor by the apostles, and in this connection adds, "Such things pertain not to true religion, but to superstition; and are indicative of attention rather to useless outward forms than to intelligent consistent worship. Such surely ought to be suppressed, that we may not seem to worship as the heathen do."\*

On another occasion Tertullian adds, "we pray *with head uncovered*, because not ashamed; *without a monitor*, because from the heart."† This he says in direct contrast of the prayers of Christians with those of the heathen, and to show the sincerity and loyalty of Christians in their prayers. The heathen were accustomed, it is well known, to make use of set forms of prayer, and a prompter used to precede the suppliant with the form of prayer, which the worshipper repeated after his monitor.‡

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\* Quæ ratio est, manibus quidem ablutis, spiritu vero sordente orationem obire! quando et ipsis manibus spirituales munditiæ sint necessariae, ut ■ falso, a veneficiis, ab idolatria, ceterisque maculis, quæ spiritu conceptæ manuum opera transiguntur, puræ alleventur. Hæ sunt veræ munditiæ, non quas plerique superstitione curant, ad omnem orationem etiam cum lavacro totius corporis aquam sumentes. Id cum scrupulose percunctarar, et rationem requirerem, comperi commemorationem esse in Domini dedicationem. Nos Dominum adoramus, non dedimus. Imo et adversari debemus detitoris exemplo, nec propterea manus abluere, nisi quod conversationis humanæ inquinimentum conscientiæ causa lavemus. Cæterum satis mundæ sunt manus, quas cum toto corpore in Christo semel lavimus. . . . Sed quoniam unum aliquod attigimus vacuæ observationis, non pigebit cætera quoque denotare, quibus merito vanitas exprobranda est; siquidem sine ullius aut dominici aut apostolici precepti auctoritate fiunt. Hujusmodi enim non religioni, sed superstitioni deputantur, affectata, et coacta, et curiosi potius, quam rationalis officii; certe vel eo coercenda, quod gentilibus adæquent.

† Capite nudo, quia non erubescimus, denique sine monitore, quia de pectore.—*Apol.* c. 30.

‡ In candida veste, verbenas manu præferens, *capite velato*, præibat preces regi.—Cited in note of *Migne's Patrologiæ*, vol. ii., *Apol.* c. 30, p. 443.

The manner in which Christians paid their devotions to their God is here strongly contrasted with the forms of worship which the heathen observed. They prayed with the head covered; Christians with the head uncovered. Their prayers were heartless forms, dictated from a prayer-book by a monitor. Those of Christians were offered without a monitor, because from the heart: "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

"What is to be understood by praying from the heart will best appear from inquiring into what is opposed to it, viz. the praying by a monitor. Now, the praying by a monitor, as is acknowledged by all, was praying by a book; but thus Tertullian affirms the primitive Christians prayed not: 'We do not pray,' saith he, 'with a monitor, reading our prayers out of a book. No, but on the contrary, we pray *de pectore*, *from the heart*, our own heart and soul dictating to us what is most proper and suitable to be asked, having no need of any other monitor besides.'"

Such is the comment of Chancellor King upon this passage; and with him we must believe that the prayer-book belongs to the ceremonies of an age subsequent both to that of Christ and the apostles and that of the primitive fathers and apologists for Christianity. The use of forms of prayer was one of the numerous changes which, from the third century, began to impair the primitive form of worship and government of the church. The history of the church, from that period, abounds with instances of corrupt imitations of Jewish and pagan worship, which finally produced an entire subversion of the simplicity of primitive worship.

In the earliest ages of the church, no complaint is made of any change of forms of prayer, liturgy, or creed, evidently because no uniformity had yet been established by ecclesiastical authority. After they are known to have existed, they are known to have been the subject of perpetual change, and of continual complaint.

The apologists made use of many arguments against their enemies, and often cited the Scriptures in their defence, and in evidence of the unjust imputations of their opponents against them; but they make no reference to prayer-book, liturgy, or missal, neither is any ever mentioned by their persecutors. The obvious inference is, that none were then known.

Tertullian affirms the benevolent intentions and loyalty of the Christians toward their rulers, and appeals to the Scriptures in proof,<sup>1</sup> which requires us to pray for "kings, and for all that are in authority." How naturally and conclusively would his appeal



have been made to their prayer-book and liturgy, had such then been recorded and authorized in liturgical worship.

He wrote an elaborate dissertation on the Lord's prayer, which he commends as the basis of all true prayer, and says, that after this, each one in prayer will direct his supplications according to his peculiar circumstances.\*

Chancellor King,† in commenting on this passage from Tertulian, has collected several instances of occasional requests in public prayers, to show that Christians of that age were not restricted to any established forms of prayer. "Cyprian, for example, assures Moses and Maximus, two Roman confessors, that he remembered them in his public prayers with his congregation.‡ And in another epistle, when he congratulates Pope Lucius upon his return from banishment, he assures him 'that he did not cease in his public prayers to bless God for so great a mercy, and to pray Him that was perfect to keep and perfect in him the glorious crown of his confession.'§ And so, when the church of Carthage sent a sum of money to the bishops of Numidia for the redemption of some Christian captives, they desired those bishops to 'remember them in their public prayers.'|| So that their prayers could not be stinted, invariable forms, because they could add new petitions, as their occasions and circumstances did require."

Polycarp exhorts the church at Philippi to pray for all the saints, and for kings, rulers, and princes; for them that persecute and hate, and for the enemies of the cross.<sup>2</sup> Would he not rather have directed them to the use of the collect or prayers for such, had they been in use by this church?

According to Justin Martyr, half a century earlier than Tertul-

\* Quoniam tamen Dominus prospector humanarum necessitatum, seorsum post traditam orandi disciplinam, *Petite*, inquit, et *accipietis*, (Luc. xi. 8.) et sunt quæ petantur procircumstantia cujusque, præmissa legitima et ordinaria oratione, quasi fundamento, accidentium jus est desideriorum, jus est superfluendi extrinsecus petitiones, cum memoria tamen præceptorum, ne quantum a præceptis, tantum ab auribus Dei longe simus.—*De Orat.* c. 10.

† Second Part of the Enquiry into the Constitution, Discipline, Unity, and Worship of the Primitive Church, part ii. c. ii. § 7.

‡ Et quando in sacrificiis precem cum plurimis facimus.—*Ep.* 16, § 1, p. 44.

§ Hic quoque in sacrificiis atque in orationibus nostris non cessantes Deo—gratias agere, et orare pariter, ac petere, ut qui perfectus est atque perficiens, custodiat et perficiat in vobis confessionis vestræ gloriosam coronam.—*Ep.* lviii. § 2, p. 163.

|| In mentem habeatis in orationibus vestris et eis vicem boni operis in sacrificiis et precibus representetis.—*Ep.* lx. § 4, p. 167.

lian, and but a little more than this term of time from the age of the apostles, the minister, not in private, but *in public worship*, prayed *according to his ability*, that is, *extempore*, according to all just interpretation. The passage has been noticed in the preceding chapter, pp. 273-4. In addition to what has there been said, the following remarks from Chancellor King are submitted, illustrative of the meaning of this vexed passage.

“As to these prescribed forms, there is not the least mention of them in any of the primitive writings, nor the least word or syllable tending thereunto that I can find, which is a most unaccountable silence, if ever such there were; but rather some expressions intimating the contrary, as that famous controverted place of Justin Martyr, who, describing the manner of the prayer before the celebration of the Lord's supper, says that ‘the bishop sent up prayers and praises to God with his utmost ability,’ ὅση δύναμις αὐτοῦ, that is, that he prayed with the best of his abilities, invention, expression, judgment, and the like.”

“I have not found one place, wherein this phrase of ὅση δύναμις doth not comprehend personal abilities; and several scores more might I cite, where it is so to be understood, which I shall omit, and mention only one more, spoken by Origen with respect to this duty of prayer, where it must of necessity imply personal abilities, and that is in his book *De Oratione*, (§ 2, p. 134,) where he prescribes the method and parts of prayer, the first whereof was doxology; wherein, says he, he that prays must bless God *according to his power*, κατὰ δύναμιν; where κατὰ δύναμιν must signify the performer's abilities of judgment and expression, because it is not spoken of prescribed words, but of a prescribed method of prayer; as if any one should desire me to inform him how, or in what method he must pray; I tell him, as Origen doth in this place, that first he must begin with an invocation of God by his titles and attributes; then he must proceed to praise God for his mercies and benefits, confessing withal his ingratitude and unfruitfulness; then beg pardon for past sins, strength against future, and conclude all, with praising God through Christ, and that he must do all this according to the utmost of his ability. What could any one imagine that I should intend by this advice of following this method to the utmost of his power, but the exerting of his own abilities, understanding, memory, invention, expression, and the like, since I direct him not to any prescribed words, but only to the observation of those general heads and parts of prayer?”

Basil, in giving instructions how to pray, advises to make choice of scriptural forms of thanksgiving, and when you have praised him thus, *according to your ability*, ὡς δύνασαι,—exactly equivalent to δύναμις,—then he advises the suppliant to proceed to petitions.<sup>4</sup> It appears from this father, who lived two hundred years after Justin, that in his age the church had not received any primitive forms of prayer. “Who of the saints has left us in writing the words of a prayer at the consecration of the eucharistical bread and the cup of blessing?”\* But every liturgy extant, whether ancient or modern, has a form for the consecration of the sacramental elements. If then Basil had received no form for the consecration of the bread and wine of the Lord’s supper, the inference is conclusive that no ancient liturgies whatever were at this time known to him. This conclusion is in harmony also with the teaching of the apostles and the spirit of primitive Christianity. Regardless of all forms, the religion of Christ and his apostles looks only to the spirit of the suppliant, and is in its nature opposed to prescribed forms and ceremonies. Matt. vi. 5–8; John iv. 24; Jude 20. Several examples of prayer by Jesus and his disciples are recorded, viz. Acts i. 24; iv. 24–31; ix. 40; xii. 5; xx. 36. These all appear to have been occasional, and offered extempore. St. Paul’s strictures upon the irregularities of the Corinthians, 1 Cor. xiv., evidently indicate that their prayers were extempore.

It is also worthy of remark, that, with the exception of certain forms, such as Amen, Grace be unto you, etc., no instance occurs of the *repetition* of the same prayer. *This circumstance forbids the idea of any prescribed forms of prayer.* Even our Lord’s prayer is recorded with essential variations by the evangelists Matthew (vi. 9–13) and Luke (xi. 1–4.) Hence the inference, that the prayer is of a general character, expressing rather the subjects than the form of our petitions to God.

For a further consideration of this topic the reader is referred to the Apostolical and Primitive Church, chap. xi., where the discussion is directed to the defence of the following propositions:—

1. That the use of forms of prayer is opposed to the spirit of the Christian dispensation.
2. That it is opposed to the example of Christ and of his apostles.
3. That it is unauthorized by their instructions.

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\* Τὰ τῆς ἐπικλήσεως ῥήματα ἐπὶ τῇ ἀναδείξει τοῦ ἄρτου τῆς εὐχαριστίας, καὶ τοῦ ποτηρίου τῆς ἐνλογίας, τίς τῶν ἁγίων ἐπιγράφως ἡμῶν καταλέλοιπεν.—*De Spirit. Sanct.* cap. xxvii.

4. That it is contrary to the simplicity and freedom of primitive worship.

5. That it was unknown in the primitive church.

The author of the Prize Essay on the Apostolical Constitutions, in his learned and able discussion assigns the origin of liturgical worship to the latter part of the third century and beginning of the fourth. "Until the middle of the third century there still prevails a simple, not a complicated manner of service. The end of the third and beginning of the fourth century form the transition, till, in the time of Cyril of Jerusalem, † 386, and Chrysostom, † 407, we perceive a divine service completely changed, and often dissenting essentially from the earlier."

About the same time written forms of prayer begin to be the subject of remark and discussion by the fathers and in councils. The third Council of Carthage, A. D. 397, decreed that no one should use any prayers which he may have copied out for himself, unless he first collated them in connection with brethren better informed.\* Augustin, of the same age, complains that many, in the simplicity of their ignorance, make use of prayers composed not only by unskilful babblers, but even by heretics. And the Council of Milive, A. D. 402, as given in the African code, ordered that all prayers which had been approved in council might be used by all, and that no other, unless approved by the more discreet, should be rehearsed.†

These passages clearly indicate the absence of all uniformity in the use of a liturgy, while they as clearly show that written forms have begun to take the place of extempore prayer. Two hundred years later we find decrees of council requiring uniformity in liturgical worship.‡

## § 2. OF THE UNITY AND TRINITY OF THE GODHEAD IMPLIED IN THE DEVOTIONS OF THE ANCIENT CHURCH.

EVERY prayer and every song of praise was presented by the worshipper to one God, the Maker of heaven and earth. In this,

\* Quasunque sibi preces aliquis describit, non eis utatur, nisi prius eas cum instructoribus fratribus contulerit.—C. 23.

† Placuit etiam hoc, ut preces quæ probatæ fuerint in concilio sive præfationes, sive commendationes, seu manus impositiones ab omnibus celebrentur, nec aliæ omnino contra fidem præferantur, sed quæcunque a prudentioribus fuerint collectæ dicantur.

‡ Unus ordo orandi atque psallendi nobis per omnem Hispaniam atque Galliam servetur, unus modus in missarum solemnitatibus.—IV. Conc. Tolet, A. D. 633, c. ii. Comp. Conc. Vasan. A. D. 492, c. iii.

Christianity was directly opposed to the polytheism of the age, while it perfectly harmonized with the doctrine of the Jewish religion—"Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is one God."

At the same time, all the prayers and songs of the church were directed to the *triune God*, or distinctly implied the doctrine of the Trinity. The church guarded itself against the charge of paganism by continually asserting that it rejected all polytheism, and that the doctrine of the Trinity bore no analogy to tritheism. Indeed, it is very evident, in view of all that the ancient apologists for Christianity have said, that, in worshipping the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, they did not worship three Gods.

The distinction between the Jews and Christians on this point is well described by Tertullian, who says, "They believe God to be one in such a sense that it is improper to unite with Him the Son and Holy Spirit. What can the distinction be between them and us, save that in the new dispensation God is revealed to us as one God, through the Son and the Spirit, although he is still known by his own appropriate appellations, and in his own person, while in the former dispensation he is not revealed to us through the intervention of the Son and the Spirit."<sup>1</sup> Jerome, Augustin, and Cosmus Indicopleustes, and others, express much the same sentiments. Ever since the time of the Christian apologists, dogmatists, and polemics, the strife has been to detect, in the creeds and liturgy of the Jews, in their names of the Deity, doxologies, and ascriptions of praise, implied evidence of the Trinity, and to ascribe to the Jews their belief in God as existing in three persons.<sup>2</sup> But however groundless this interpretation of the Jewish Scriptures may be, it shows distinctly what the doctrine of the polemics was respecting the Trinity.

The church has also had occasion to defend herself, in the worship of the three persons of the Godhead, against numerous classes of heretics who are known under the general name of anti-trinitarians—Patripassians, Sabellians, Gnostics, Manicheans, Arians, etc. In all these controversies the church has sought to maintain the doctrine of the Trinity in its integrity. "Our hope," says Cyril of Jerusalem, "is in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. We teach, not the doctrine of three Gods, but, with his Son, and the Holy Spirit, one God; of necessity, our faith is undivided. We neither sunder the Trinity, as do some, nor confound it, like the Sabellians. But we acknowledge with piety the Father, who sent the Son, our Saviour; we acknowledge the Son, who promised to send us the Comforter from the Father; we acknowledge the Holy Ghost, who



has taught us by the prophets, and who, on the day of Pentecost, descended in tongues of fire upon the apostles, in Jerusalem, the head of the church.”<sup>3</sup>

Such being the decided testimony of the church, setting forth the doctrine of the Trinity as the *grand characteristic of the Christian religion*, it is no matter of surprise that this doctrine is so constantly advanced under all circumstances; especially that it is repeated in their doxologies, psalms, and hymns. They repeated the doxology at each assembly for religious worship, and at each rehearsal of the liturgy; and with the same they also concluded their homilies and their catechetical instructions. This doxology was as follows: “To God the Father, and his Son our Lord Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, be honour and might for ever and ever. Amen.”

They were so minutely careful respecting the phraseology of these forms, that it became a question, which Basil the Great discussed at length, whether the preposition *ἐν*, *in*, or *διά*, *through*, or *σύν*, *with*, should be used in connection with the Holy Spirit.<sup>4</sup> From this we learn that in the fourth century the same controversies were had on this subject which were renewed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries throughout Germany, Holland, England, France, and Sweden.

Eusebius describes the heresy which denied the divinity of Christ as having arisen in the second century, which Victor, A. D. 189, and others, opposed. “There are works of certain brethren older than Victor’s time, which they wrote in defence of the truth against the heresies then prevailing. I speak of Justus, and Miltiades, and Tatian, and Clement, and many others, in all which the divinity of Christ is asserted. For who knows not the works of Irenæus, and Melito, and the rest, in which Christ is announced as God and man? Whatever psalms and hymns were written by the brethren from the beginning, celebrating Christ, the Word of God, by asserting his divinity. Since then the doctrine of the church has been proclaimed so many years, how could it happen that those until the times of Victor preached the gospel after this manner, [denying the divinity of Christ, as the enemies of Victor falsely alleged,] and how are they so devoid of shame as to utter these falsehoods against Victor, well knowing that Victor excommunicated that currier Theodotus, the leader and father of this God-denying apostasy.”<sup>5</sup>

So general was this recognition of the Trinity in public prayer, in the fourth and fifth centuries, that merely upon the mention of the name of God, the adoration of God *in three persons* was, of

course, presupposed and implied. Nay, it may be affirmed as a general truth, that any petition addressed to *either* of the persons of the Godhead was directed to all. To prevent confusion of mind, it was indeed decreed by the Council of Hippo, c. 21, A. D. 397, and confirmed by the Council of Carthage, A. D. 525, that the prayer should be directed to the *Father* only, but this was distinctly understood and explained to be a prayer to the three persons of the Godhead.\* Similar sentiments are found abundantly in the writings of the ancients,<sup>6</sup> so that it is an undeniable fact that their prayers and psalmody were indited by zealous trinitarians. "From all which," as Bingham very justly observes, "it is evident, to a demonstration, that the three persons of the Holy Trinity were always the object of divine adoration from the first foundation of the primitive church, and that the giving of divine honour to the Son, and Holy Ghost, as God, was not the invention or addition of any later ages."<sup>7</sup>

### § 3. OF DIVINE WORSHIP PAID TO CHRIST.

It is a peculiar characteristic of the Christian religion, that it offers divine honours to Christ. It teaches not merely that prayer should be offered *in the name of Jesus*, but directly to Him. Every prayer, and every hymn, while it honours the sacred Trinity, has also another design. It distinctly recognises the divinity of Christ, and shows what views the Christian church had of the person of the Saviour. Pliny says, A. D. 107, that "they were wont to meet together on a stated day (the Lord's day) before it was light, and sing alternately, among themselves, a hymn to Christ, as God. To sing a hymn, *carmen dicere*, may imply, either that they offered to him a sacred song or a *prayer*; but in either case it was the offering of divine honours to him.

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\* Si qui catholici fideles hujus sacramenti nunc usque videantur ignari, deinceps scire debent, omne cujuslibet honorificentiae et sacrificii salutaris obsequium et Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto, hoc est, sanctae Trinitati ab ecclesia catholica pariter exhiberi. In cujus utique uno nomine manifestum est, sanctum quoque baptismum celebrari. Neque enim praejudicium Filio vel Spiritui Sancto comparatur, dum ad Patris personam precatio ab offerente dirigitur: cujus consummatio, dum Filii et Spiritus S. complectitur nomen, ostendit, nullum esse in Trinitate discrimen. Quia dum ad solius Patris personam sermo dirigitur, bene credentis fide tota Trinitas honoratur; et quum ad Patrem litantis destinatur intentio, sacrificii munus omni Trinitati uno eodemque offertur litantis officio.—S. FULGENT. RUSP. *Ad Monimum*, lib. ii. c. v. edit. Basil. 1621, p. 328.

Polycarp, in his epistle to the Philippians, i. 12, says, "Now the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and he himself who is our everlasting High-Priest, the Son of God, even Jesus Christ, build you up in faith and in truth, and in all meekness and lenity." The church of Smyrna, in their circular epistle respecting the death of Polycarp, say, "Neither is it possible for us ever to forsake Christ, who suffered for the salvation of all such as shall be saved throughout the whole world, the righteous for the ungodly; nor to worship any other besides him. For him indeed, as being the Son of God, we adore."<sup>1</sup>

Origen against Celsus says, "All supplications, prayers, and intercessions are to be offered up to the most high God through this High-Priest, who is above all angels, who is *the living Word and God*." He further says, "we pray also to the Word himself, and make supplication." This he vindicates at length against the charge, on the one hand, of worshipping more Gods than one; and on the other, against the imputation of worshipping him as a subordinate and created being, showing that he is one with God, and our Mediator and Intercessor with the Father. He concludes this discussion by declaring, "We worship the Father, while we admire and adore the Son, who is his word, and wisdom, and truth, and righteousness; and whatever else we are taught to believe of the Son of God, begotten of such a Father."<sup>2</sup>

This interesting passage fully illustrates the sentiments of the primitive church on the subject. A multitude of other passages, to the same effect, may be found in the authors quoted in the index.<sup>3</sup>

#### § 4. OF THE FILIAL AND CONFIDING SPIRIT OF THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH.

By this the Christian religion is distinguished from all others. It teaches us to offer our addresses unto God *as our Father*; to come unto him, not as a servant unto his master, but as children to a parent, confident of finding audience and acceptance with him. "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba, Father." To the Jew, the Lord God is a being of terrible majesty, repelling every presumptuous approach to him. To the Christian, he is one of endearing kindness and condescension, inviting him to draw nigh with confidence. To the one, he appears in stern and awful sanctity; to the other, in the mild majesty of love.

## § 5. OF THE SIMPLICITY AND BREVITY OF THE DEVOTIONS OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

THE prayers of the church were offered in language the most artless and natural. Even the most learned of the apologists and early fathers, such as Justin Martyr, Theophilus of Antioch, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Tertullian, Cyprian, Arnobius, and Lactantius, who were no strangers to the graces of diction, refused all ornamental embellishments in their addresses to the throne of grace, alleging that the kingdom of heaven consists not in word but in power. 1 Cor. iv. 20.\* Their prayers were accordingly offered in the greatest simplicity, and as far as possible in the phraseology of Scripture. This artlessness and elegant simplicity appears in striking contrast with the ostentation and bombast of a later date.

This contrast appears equally great also in the brevity of these prayers. It was a maxim in the primitive church, that many words should never be employed to express what might better be said in a few. So manifest was this excellence, that Basil, Chrysostom, and Gregory the Great successively attempted to abridge the formularies of the church and restore their early simplicity and brevity.<sup>1</sup>

## § 6. OF THE CATHOLIC SPIRIT OF THEIR DEVOTIONS.

THE church, receiving the acknowledged truth that in every place he that feareth God and doeth righteousness is accepted of Him, restricted her devotions to no particular tongue. It was, indeed, a disputed question, at a very early period, in what language Christ and his apostles performed their devotions? Whether in the Greek, or Hebrew, or Syro-Chaldaic. But it was not accounted essential that the devotions of the church should be performed in the same language. Accordingly, there are extant examples of prayers and of spiritual songs which were uttered in the vernacular tongue as early as the second and third centuries. Celsus, indeed, urged it as a grave objection against the Christians, that they introduced into their prayers certain strange and barbarous expressions, having reference probably to such terms as Amen, Hallelujah, Hosanna, etc. To which Origen replied, that both

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\* Cum de rebus agitur ab ostentatione submotis quid dicatur spectandum est, non quali cum amenitate dicatur; nec, quid aures commulceat, sed quas afferat audientibus utilitates.

Greeks and Romans, in prayer, spoke in their own native tongue; each, in his own dialect, offering prayer and praise to God as he is best able. And the Lord of all languages listens to each suppliant praying in his own tongue, but hears, as it were, one voice expressed by different signs and in various sounds.<sup>1</sup> Similar sentiments are expressed by other writers.<sup>2</sup>

No prescribed time or place for prayer was required by the church. Nor was any rule given respecting the direction of the eye, the bending of the knees, or position of the hands. Neither was there any established form of prayer or praise for *general use*. With the single exception of the instructions given in the Apostolical Constitutions for the private use of the Lord's prayer, there is no instance of any synodical decree respecting it until the sixth and seventh centuries.<sup>3</sup> Every church, whether national or individual, prescribed its own mode of worship. In many instances the prayers of the church were merely submitted to the examination and approbation of the bishop. Beyond all question, the use of a liturgy and ritual was at first wholly voluntary. This subject is discussed at length by Bingham, who maintains that a liturgy and set forms of prayer were used from the beginning, but admits that each church was at liberty to form their own liturgy, and that the prayers were probably uttered *memoriter*, and continued for one or two centuries *by tradition*, before they were committed to writing.<sup>4</sup>

Respecting the number of prayers offered in public, no general rule was given. It was customary, however, to begin and close religious service with prayer. Here, as in other things, the same simplicity was advocated by Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Cyprian, Irenæus, Origen, etc. But the Latin and Greek churches, in time, greatly departed from the spirit and taste of the primitive church.

#### § 7. OF AUDIBLE AND SILENT PRAYER.

THIS distinction was first made in the secret discipline of the church. Silent prayer was restricted to the mental recital of the Lord's prayer, which neither the catechumens, nor the profane of any description, were allowed to repeat. Professing Christians repeated it in the presence of such, not audibly but silently. But at the communion, when withdrawn from such persons, they repeated it aloud at the call of the deacon.

There was another species of silent prayer, which consisted in pious ejaculations offered by the devout Christian on entering upon



public worship. This commendable custom is still observed in many Protestant churches. According to the Council of Laodicea, c. 19, A. D. 320–372, prayer was offered immediately after the sermon for catechumens, then for penitents. Then, after the imposition of hands and the benediction, followed the prayers of the believers,—the first in silence; the second and third, audibly. They then exchanged the kiss of charity, during which time their offerings were brought to the altar. The assembly were then dismissed with the benediction, *Itē in pace*, go in peace.

The primitive church never chanted their prayers, as was the custom of the Jews, and still is of the Mohammedans, as well as of the Roman Catholics, and many of the Protestant churches both in England and on the continent; but reverently addressed the throne of grace in an easy, natural, and subdued tone of voice.

#### § 8. OF THE LORD'S PRAYER.<sup>1</sup>

THE opinions of the learned, even to the present day, are greatly divided respecting the design of our Lord in giving this prayer. Three several theories have been advanced on this subject.

1. That the Lord Jesus did not give this as a prescribed form; but only to illustrate that spirit of filial love and reverence in which all prayers should be offered to God. It was given to teach the *nature* and appropriate *subjects* of prayer.

2. That it was a prescribed form, to be used, not only by his disciples, but by believers in every age and country, like the prescribed form in which baptism is to be administered.

3. That it is an epitome of the Jewish liturgy which was at that time extant. The several parts of this prayer are supposed to be the very words in which the several prayers of the Jewish service began; and that the whole was embodied by our Lord as a substitute for so many long and unmeaning prayers.

The historical facts connected with the use of the Lord's prayer, may be stated as follows:—

1. It was not in use in the church in the age of the apostles. Not the remotest hint is given in the history of the apostles that this prayer constituted any part of their religious worship. The apostle is silent on this point even in 1 Cor. xiv., where he is treating of their devotions. In the absence of written testimony, we are, indeed, directed to uncertain tradition to supply its place. But in every view of the subject, the assertion that this prayer was

used, either by the apostles or their immediate successors, must be regarded as arbitrary and groundless.

The apostolic fathers make no mention of any prayer which can be referred to the authority of Christ. Justin Martyr, the earliest after the apostolic fathers, in the passage already noticed,<sup>2</sup> distinctly indicates that the clergy, in their public prayers, were directed only by the suggestions of their own hearts and the wants of the worshippers. This freedom in extempore prayer does not, however, of necessity exclude the use of the Lord's prayer, to which he seems in several instances to allude. He speaks of God as the Father, *τῶν ὁλῶν*, the import of which is similar to the preface of the Lord's prayer, "*Our Father which art in heaven.*"

Irenæus, † A. D. 202, distinctly quotes from our Lord's prayer,\* but gives no intimation of its being used in public worship; Clemens Alexandrinus, † A. D. 218, many times alludes to it in like manner.<sup>3</sup> The authority of the Apostolical Constitutions is irrelevant, as belonging to a later period.

2. Tertullian, † A. D. 220, Cyprian, † A. D. 258, and Origen, † A. D. 254, fully concur in testifying to the use of the Lord's prayer in the second and third centuries.

Tertullian declares it to be not only a form prescribed by Christ for all ages, but asserts that it contains the substance of all prayer, and is an epitome of the whole gospel,<sup>4</sup> *brevarium totius evangelii*. Cyprian repeats much the same sentiments, acknowledging Tertullian as his guide and instructor, and often explaining more fully the sentiments of that author. He calls the Lord's prayer "our public and common prayer."<sup>5</sup> Origen also has a long treatise on the same subject, in which he says that this was a prescribed form, containing all that the true Christian ever has occasion to pray for.<sup>6</sup> Authorities, in great numbers, to the same effect, may be accumulated from writers of the fourth and fifth centuries.<sup>7</sup>

3. The use of the Lord's prayer in the third, fourth, and fifth centuries was restricted to the faithful only, and was denied to catechumens.<sup>8</sup> By Chrysostom it was styled *εὐχὴ τῶν πιστῶν*, *the prayer of the faithful*.

The reason of this exclusion was, in general, that none but Christian believers had the true spirit of adoption, so that they could sincerely say, "Our Father which art in heaven."<sup>9</sup> Another rea-

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\* In oratione dicere nos docuit: et remitte nobis debita nostra.—*Adv. Hæres. lib. v. c. xvii.*

son was that the petition, "Give us this day our daily bread," was understood in a mystical sense, as relating to spiritual gifts, and appropriate especially to be used in the communion service, at which no catechumen or profane person was permitted, under any pretext whatever, to be present.<sup>10</sup>

The ancient liturgies of the Greek church connect with the Lord's prayer a doxology, which has been ascribed to Basil and to Chrysostom, recognising the doctrine of the Trinity as implied in the prayer, "Thine is the kingdom, power, and glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, both now and for ever, world without end." The doctrine revealed in this doxology, none but the faithful were permitted to know. The doxology which is given in Matthew, at the close of the Lord's prayer, was unknown to Tertullian, Cyprian, Origen, and Cyril of Jerusalem. But it was extant as early as the middle of the fourth century.<sup>11</sup> Neither this doxology nor that above mentioned is supposed by writers to have belonged to the original text. Griesbach and Bengel suppose it to have had its origin at Constantinople, about the middle of the fourth century.

Believers were expected to repeat this prayer at least *three times* daily.<sup>12</sup> They who were baptized were also required to repeat it, together with the creed, immediately upon coming out of the water.<sup>13</sup> It was also repeated in the celebration of baptism and the Lord's supper,<sup>14</sup> marriages, funerals, ordinations, etc.

The modern custom of some Protestants, of repeating the Lord's prayer twice in the course of a sermon, has no precedent in the primitive church.

The most ancient prayers of the church which have come down to us are contained in the Apostolical Constitutions. These forms may have been in use as early as the end of the fourth century. Among these are prayers for the catechumens,<sup>15</sup> for candidates for baptism,<sup>16</sup> for penitents,<sup>17</sup> for demoniacs,<sup>18</sup> prayers for them that sleep [in death],<sup>19</sup> morning and evening prayers,<sup>20</sup> and prayers to be used on the sabbath.<sup>21</sup>

#### § 9. OF THE RESPONSES—AMEN, HALLELUJAH, HOSANNA,<sup>1</sup> ETC.

THESE were either short ejaculations to God, or exclamations designed to enkindle the devotions of believers, or an intimation that the prayer of the speaker was heard.

1. *Amen*. This, in the phraseology of the church, is denominated *oratoris signaculum*, or *devotæ concionis responsionem*,<sup>2</sup> the token

for prayer—the response of the worshippers. It intimates that the prayer of the speaker is heard and approved by him who gives this response. It is also used at the conclusion of a doxology. Rom. ix. 5. Justin Martyr is the first of the fathers who speaks of the use of this response. In speaking of the sacrament he says, that at the close of the benediction and prayer, all the assembly respond, “Amen,” which, in the Hebrew tongue, is the same as, “So let it be.”<sup>3</sup> According to Tertullian, none but the faithful were permitted to join in the response.<sup>4</sup>

In the celebration of the Lord’s supper especially, each communicant was required to give this response in a tone of earnest devotion.<sup>5</sup> Upon the reception, both of the bread and of the wine, each uttered a loud “Amen;” and, at the close of the consecration by the priest, all joined in shouting a loud “Amen.” But the practice was discontinued after the sixth century.

At the administration of baptism also, the witnesses and sponsors uttered this response in the same manner. In the Greek church it was customary to repeat this response as follows:—“This servant of the Lord is baptized in the name of the Father, Amen; and of the Son, Amen; and of the Holy Ghost, Amen; both now and for ever, world without end;” to which the people responded, “Amen.” This usage is still observed by the Greek Church in Russia. The repetitions were given thrice, with reference to the three persons of the Trinity.

2. *Hallelujah*.—This was adopted from the Jewish psalmody, particularly from those psalms (cxiii.—cxviii.) which were sung at the passover, called the Great Hillel or Hallel. It was this that our Saviour sang with his disciples at the institution of the sacrament. The word itself is an exhortation to praise God, and was so understood by Augustin, Isidorus, and others.<sup>6</sup> The use of this phrase was first adopted by the church at Jerusalem,<sup>7</sup> and from this was received by other churches. But the use of it was restricted in the Eastern, but not in the Western church, to the fifty days between Easter and Whitsunday.<sup>8</sup>

In the Greek Church it was subsequently used on occasions of grief, sorrow, and penitence, to indicate that the Christians were in such circumstances bound still to rejoice and praise God.<sup>9</sup> In the Latin, on the contrary, it denoted a joyful spirit—love, praise, thanksgiving, and was omitted on other occasions.

3. *Hosanna*.—The church, both ancient and modern, have concurred in ascribing to this word, contrary to its original import, a

signification similar to that of Hallelujah. The true signification of it is, "Lord, save," Ps. cxviii. 25, and was so understood by Origen, Jerome, and Theophylact, in their commentaries upon Matt. xxi. 15.

Eusebius gives the first instance on record of its use,<sup>10</sup> where, at the death of a certain martyr, the multitude are said to have shouted "Hosanna to the Son of David." The use of it is prescribed in the Apostolical Constitutions,<sup>11</sup> in connection with a doxology to Christ, and the first mention of it in religious worship is found also in the same work. It occurs also in the liturgy of Chrysostom. By the ancients it was uniformly regarded as a doxology.

4. *O Lord, have mercy, Κύριε ἐλέησον*.—There are many authorities, both sacred and profane, from which this phrase may have been adopted,<sup>12</sup> but it doubtless was derived from the frequent supplications in the Psalms, such as li. 1; cxxiii. 3. Comp. Matt. ix. 27; xv. 23; xx. 30; Mark x. 47. According to Augustin, Epist. clxxxviii., it was in use both in the Syriac; Armenian, and other oriental languages. The Council of Vaison, A. D. 492, c. 3, ordained that this response should be introduced into the morning and evening worship, and into the public religious service. Gregory the Great introduced a threefold form:—1. O Lord. 2. Lord, have mercy. 3. Christ, have mercy. And each, it would seem, was to be thrice repeated, with reference to the sacred Trinity.<sup>13</sup>

5. *Glory; Glory in the highest*.—This exclamation was in use, in the beginning of the sixth century, on all Sundays and holidays except Advent, the feast of the Innocents, and the season of Lent. In the seventh, the angelical doxology was used with various modifications.

6. *The Lord be with you; Peace be with you*.—The Council of Braga, A. D. 561, ordained that this should be the uniform salutation both of bishops and presbyters, when addressing the people.<sup>14</sup> During the prevalence of the system of secret instruction, this salutation was not allowed to excommunicated persons, or to penitents, or even to catechumens; but only to the faithful. Examples of the scrupulous observance of prescribed forms of salutation are cited in the index.<sup>15</sup>

7. *Let us pray; Lift up your hearts, etc.; δεηθῶμεν, oremus; sursum corda*.—In the ancient service of the church, it was the duty of the deacon to summon each class of worshippers separately to engage in prayer by saying, "Let us pray." Whether they were



to pray in silence or audibly, they received a similar intimation from the deacon. This was followed by another injunction to kneel; and at the conclusion he also directed them to arise. There were various forms of announcing the time of prayer besides the one above mentioned, such as "Give audience;" "Attend;" "Lift your hearts on high, pray, pray earnestly," etc. To which the congregation replied, "Our heart is unto the Lord," etc.<sup>16</sup>

The exhortation, "Lift up your hearts to God," occurs first in Cyprian, A. D. 250. Justin Martyr, one hundred years earlier, makes no mention of it, though particularly describing the celebration of the Lord's supper. Cyril of Jerusalem, A. D. 350, says that at this awful summons, the whole soul should be fixed upon God, and no unworthy or earthly thought should be allowed to intrude. Much more to the same effect is said by him, and by the authors quoted in the index.<sup>17</sup> During the Middle Ages, this custom was perverted to the maintenance of the doctrine of transubstantiation, —the elevation of the host, etc. In the English church, it continued unchanged until the seventeenth century. In the Lutheran church a similar usage remains to the present time.

The long prayer which, in the *missa fidelium*, the service designed for the faithful alone, in connection with the Lord's supper, usually followed the sermon, was introduced as follows:—The deacon first commanded silence and attention by exclaiming, "Let us pray;" the officiating minister then addressed the assembly in these words: "The peace of God be with you all;" to which the assembly responded, "And with thy spirit." Then said the deacon, "Salute ye one another with an holy kiss;" upon which the clergy saluted the bishop; and one another; and the laity of both sexes saluted those of their own sex. During this time, some of the deacons, and subdeacons are occupied in preserving order. One of the latter brings water for the officiating minister to wash his hands in token of the purity of mind which is acceptable to God. The deacon then says, "Let no catechumen, disciple, or unbeliever, or any of Cæsar's party remain; all you who have attended the first service retire; mothers withdraw with your infant children; let no one cherish enmity in his heart toward another; let there be no hypocrisy in any; let us set our hearts with fear and trembling to bring our offerings." These offerings are then laid upon the altar by the deacon, while the minister, with the elders, stands before it praying for himself, and with a white cloth, crossing himself upon the breast. After this he says to the assembly, "The grace

of Almighty God, the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all, Amen;" to which the people respond, "And with thy spirit." The bishop says, "Lift up your hearts on high." "Our heart is unto the Lord." "Let us bless the Lord." "It is meet and right." He then leads the devotions of the church in a prayer which refers to the great events of our Saviour's mission, and particularly to the institution of the Lord's supper, followed by supplications and intercessions, and concluded with a doxology and the Lord's Prayer, as prescribed in the Apostolical Constitutions.

#### § 10. OF THE ATTITUDE AND GESTURE IN SINGING, AND IN PRAYER.<sup>1</sup>

1. *Standing*.—In the Eastern church it was customary, as it still is with Mohammedans, Arabians, and the Parsees of Persia, to *stand* in prayer.<sup>2</sup> Many examples of this custom occur also in the Scriptures: Gen. xviii. 22; xix. 27; 2 Chron. xx. 13; 1 Sam. i. 26; Job xxx. 20; Luke xviii. 11, 13; Matt. vi. 5; Mark xi. 25.<sup>3</sup> And from the writings of Basil, Chrysostom, and the Apostolical Constitutions, it would seem that this was the *usual* attitude, and not an *exception* to the general rule, as has often been asserted, but an established custom from the earliest ages of Christianity. The Council of Nice, A. D. 325, formally ordered that the churches everywhere should observe the custom of standing in prayer.<sup>4</sup> According to Origen, the eyes and the hands should be lifted up to heaven, that the body may indicate the elevation of the soul. But he allows exceptions in case of infirmity, and according to circumstances.<sup>5</sup> He also insists that it is necessary for one to *kneel* when he prays for the forgiveness of his sins. But he is here speaking not of public, but of private prayer. The author of Questions and Answers to the Orthodox, which some erroneously have ascribed to Justin Martyr, asserts that the custom which is observed through the days of Pentecost was of apostolic origin, and refers to a passage from Irenæus, which is lost, in proof of the assertion. Epiphanius, Jerome, Augustin,<sup>6</sup> and Basil,<sup>7</sup> also concur in sanctioning the custom of standing in prayer. And it is particularly worthy of remark, that *penitents* were denied this privilege, it being the prerogative and right only of believers and consistent professors of religion.

In singing, this was regarded as the only proper and becoming attitude.<sup>8</sup>

2. *Kneeling*.—Abundant authority for this is also found in the Scriptures: Gen. xvii. 3, 17; Num. xvi. 22; Josh. v. 14; 2 Chron. xx. 18; Luke xxii. 41; Acts vii. 59, 60; ix. 40; xxi. 5; Eph. iii. 14. The act of kneeling was thought peculiarly to indicate humility before God; to exhibit a sinner who had fallen away from him, and in need of Divine grace and mercy. Accordingly, it was uniformly required of all who had fallen under censure of the church for their offences, as an indispensable condition of their restoration to their former covenant relations. Basil denominates it the *less penance*, in distinction from *prostration*, which was called the *greater penance*.

It must, indeed, be admitted, that it was very common both to kneel and to stand in prayer. But the assertion that kneeling was the uniform posture in prayer, in all acts of worship except on the Sabbath and festive occasions, is an unwarranted assumption. The most important authorities from the fathers are given in the index.<sup>9</sup>

3. *Bowing the head*.—This was a kind of intermediate attitude between standing and kneeling. Occasionally the inclination of the body is also mentioned. The bowing of the head was especially required in connection with intercessory prayers and the receiving of the benediction.<sup>10</sup>

4. *Prostration upon the ground*.—This is occasionally mentioned, but was not required as a rule of worship. It was chiefly appropriate to deep humiliations and expressions of shame or sorrow upon some very remarkable occasion, but was not the general practice of the church.<sup>11</sup>

Sitting in prayer, according to Bingham, was never allowed in the ancient church. It was universally regarded as an irreverent and heathenish posture in their devotions. Even the very heathen, as well as the whole ancient church, might justly rebuke the shameful irreverence of many Christian assemblies in sitting in prayer, a custom alike repugnant to every sentiment of devotion and every dictate of decency and propriety.

5. *The lifting up of the hands*.—This was a common rite in pagan worship, but with the Christian fathers it was peculiarly significant as an emblem of the cross, designed to assist them in holding in lively remembrance Christ crucified.<sup>12</sup> Occasionally the hands were clasped together in prayer.

In regard to the covering of the head, the church strictly observed the rule given by the apostle, 1 Cor. xi., requiring the men to be uncovered, and the women to wear their appropriate covering

in prayer. In this their custom was directly opposed to that of both Jews and Gentiles. With them, to appear with the head covered, denoted freedom and independence. But the Christian, as the servant of the Lord, appeared *uncovered*, in token of his humility and dependence.

From the period of the second century it was customary, both in the Eastern and Western church, to pray facing toward the east, contrary to the custom of the Jews, who prayed toward the west. 1 Kings viii. 4; 2 Chron. xxix. 6; Dan. vi. 10. The altars of the Christian churches were situated toward the east, and the dead were buried so that the eye might be turned in the same direction. The reason for all this seems to have been derived from the ceremonies of baptism, in which they were accustomed to turn toward the west as the region of darkness, where the prince of darkness might be supposed to dwell, and solemnly to renounce the devil and his works; and then to turn about to the east and enter into covenant with Christ. They might, therefore, very naturally suppose that in prayer they ought to direct themselves to God in the same manner in which they first entered into covenant with him.<sup>13</sup> Several other reasons are assigned by Bingham<sup>14</sup> and Dr. Cave.<sup>15</sup>

*Of the time for prayer.*—Christ and his apostles give no specific instructions, but generally, to pray at all times and in every place. But it became, in the second and third centuries, a prevalent sentiment in the church, that every Christian ought to pray *three times a day*; at the third, sixth, and ninth hour, corresponding to the hours of nine, twelve, and three o'clock. For the observance of these hours they had certain mystical reasons drawn from the doctrine of the Trinity. The third being emblematical of the Trinity, and the sixth and ninth being formed by *repetitions of three*.<sup>16</sup> But Tertullian and Cyprian both urge the propriety of morning and evening prayer, at the rising and setting of the sun, in remembrance of the *Sun of Righteousness*, whose absence we have so much occasion to deplore, and in whose light we must rejoice. The Apostolical Constitutions also prescribe the offering of prayer five, six, and even seven times a day.<sup>17</sup>

## CHAPTER XVI.

### OF THE PSALMODY OF THE CHURCH.

#### § 1. OF ORIGINAL AUTHORITIES.

THERE is undeniable evidence that the sacred song has, in the Christian church, ever been a delightful part of social and public worship. At the institution of the Lord's supper, our Saviour and his disciples "sang an hymn;" and repeated reference is made to this devotional exercise in the subsequent writings of the apostles. Acts xvi. 25; Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16; James v. 13. Grotius contends that in Acts iv. 24-30, we have the substance of a hymn to Christ, and the first Christian song. Other examples he finds in the Apocalypse, and his views are approved by Augusti.

The earliest historical notices of the psalmody of the church have been collected by writers on this subject, of which the following summary is taken from the author's Apostolical and Primitive Church, to which reference may be had for a fuller consideration of this interesting portion of public worship:—

The earliest authentic record on this subject is the celebrated letter from Pliny to Trajan, just at the close of the apostolical age, A. D. 103, 104. In the investigations which he instituted against the Christians of his period, he discovered, among other things, that they were accustomed to meet before day, to offer praise to Christ as God, or as *a* God, as some contend that it should be rendered.\* The expression is somewhat equivocal, and might be used with reference to the ascription of praise in prayer, or in song. But it appears that these Christians rehearsed their *carmen, invicem alternately*, as if in responsive songs, according to the ancient custom of singing in the Jewish worship. Tertullian's exposition of this passage is, that these Christians met before the dawn of the morning *to sing praise to Christ and to God, ad canendum Christi*

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\* *Carmen Christo quasi Deo dicere secum invicem.*—*Epist. lib. x. xevii.*



et Deo;<sup>1</sup> that of Eusebius that they sang the praises of Christ as God, τὸν Χριστὸν θεοῦ δίκην ὑμνεῖν.<sup>2</sup> Both, also, make distinct mention of sacred psalmody as a part of public worship.<sup>3</sup> Justin Martyr makes mention of the psalmody of the Ephesian Christians. He is also supposed to have written a treatise on Christian psalmody, the loss of which we have deeply to deplore. Origen informs us that the Christians sang hymns to Him alone who is called God over all, and to his only begotten [Son.]\*

Eusebius also has left on record the important testimony of Caius, as is generally supposed, an ancient historian, and contemporary of Tertullian. "Who knows not the writings of Irenæus, Melito, and others, which exhibit Christ as God and man? And how many songs and odes of the brethren there are, written from the beginning, ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, by believers, which offer praise to Christ as the Word of God, ascribing divinity to him."† This passage not only presents a new and independent testimony to the use of spiritual songs in the Christian church, from the remotest antiquity, to the praise of Christ as divine, but it shows that these, in great numbers, had been committed to writing, as it appears, for continued use. So that we here have evidence of the existence of a Christian hymn-book from the beginning.

Christ, the only begotten of the Father, is the burden of these primitive songs and hymns. Here is he set forth *doctrinally*, θεολογικῶς, as the incarnate Word of God, as God and man. His mediatorial character was the subject of the songs of these apostolical and primitive saints. This sacred theme inspired the earliest anthems of the Christian church; and as it has ever been the subject of her sweetest melodies and loftiest strains, so doubtless will it continue to be until the last of her ransomed sons shall end the songs of the redeemed on earth, and wake his harp to nobler, sweeter strains in heaven.

The songs of the primitive Christians were not restricted to their public devotions. In their social circles, and around their domestic altars, they worshipped God in the sacred song; and in their daily occupations they were wont to relieve their toil and refresh their spirits by renewing their favourite songs of Zion. Persecuted and afflicted as they often were,—in solitary cells of the prison, in the

\* Ἐπὶ πᾶσι ὕμνους εἰς μόνον τὸν λεγόμενον θεον, καὶ τὸν μονογενῆ αὐτοῦ.—*Contr. Celsum*. viii. c. lxvii.

† Ψαλμοὶ δὲ ὅσοι καὶ ὥδαί ἀδελφῶν ἀπαρχῆς ὑπὸ πιστῶν γραφεῖσθαι, τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ τὸν Χριστὸν ὕμνοισι θεολογοῦντες.—*Eccles. Hist.* lib. v. xxviii.

more dismal abodes of the mines to which they were doomed, or as wandering exiles in foreign countries,—still they forgot not to sing the Lord's song in the prison or the mine, or in the strange lands to which they were driven.

## § 2. OF THE MATERIAL AND SUBJECT OF CHRISTIAN PSALMODY.

THE poetical parts of the Old Testament, and especially the Psalms of David, supplied chiefly the spiritual songs of the primitive church. At first the sacred psalmody of the synagogue is supposed to have been transferred to the worship of the Christian church. The apostles and their first converts were Jews, and in the Christian church doubtless sang praises to God in their own sacred psalmody, with which they were already familiar.

The distinction between *psalms* and *hymns* is not very clear. The former term is restricted to the psalms of David; the latter, to other poetical songs, like that of Moses, Exod. xv.; Deut. xxxii., xxxiii.; the song of Deborah; the elegy on the death of Saul and Jonathan; and the song of Hezekiah, Isa. xxxviii. 10–22, &c. Latin writers like Augustin and Rufinus, define a hymn to be a *song sung to the praise of God*.\*

The earliest songs of the Christian church of which profane history gives us any knowledge, as has been already remarked, and as may appear from the ancient hymns subjoined to this chapter, was the Divine character and mission of our Redeemer. This, indeed, has in every age been the inspiring theme of the Christian poet and of the psalmody of the Christian church. Christ and his cross are and ever have been all her theme.

## § 3. OF THE MODE OF SINGING.

1. *Congregational singing*.—The prevailing mode of singing during the first three centuries was *congregational*. The whole congregation united their voices in the sacred song of praise, in strains suited to their ability. Their music, if such it could be called, was, of necessity, rude and simple. Indeed, it appears to have been a kind of recitative or chant. The charm of their sacred music was not in the harmony of sweet sounds, but in the melody

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\* Si sit laus, et non sit Dei, non est hymnus; si laus et Dei et non cantatur, non est hymnus.—RUFINUS in Ps. 72. Hymnus scitis quid est; *cantus* est cum laude Dei.—AUGUST. in Ps. 148.

of the heart. But Gerbert has collected authorities which show that it was not devoid of taste.

Burney, in his history of music, supposes that the psalmody of the church corresponded with that of the Hebrews; but that of the churches where paganism prevailed, resembled also that which had been used in the temple worship of the Greeks. Of this he finds indisputable proof in the versification of the hymns which are found in the breviaries and missals of the ancient church.

But, however this may be, the most ancient and the most common mode of singing was confessedly for the whole assembly, men, women, and children, to blend their voices in their songs of praise in the great congregation. Such is the testimony of Hilary,<sup>1</sup> of Augustin,<sup>2</sup> and Chrysostom. "Formerly all came together, and united in their song, as is still our custom."<sup>3</sup> "Men and women, the aged and the young, were distinguished only by their skill in singing, for the spirit which lead the voice of each one, blended all in one harmonious melody."<sup>4</sup>

2. *Responsive singing*.—This style of singing was, according to Theodoret, first introduced at Antioch by two heretical monks, A. D. 350. "They were the first who divided the choir and taught them to sing the psalms of David responsively. This custom, which they thus originated in Antioch, spread everywhere, even to the very ends of the habitable world."<sup>5</sup> This statement, however, must be received with caution. The authorities of Augustin and Chrysostom above, subsequent to this period, are in favour of congregational singing.

Ambrose, a few years later, introduced a highly artistic and responsive style of sacred music into the church at Milan,<sup>6</sup> which prevailed extensively in the Western church. The practical effect of this change was that sacred music became highly artistic and theatrical, which Jerome and Chrysostom severely censured.\* The congregation, unpractised in such refinements, were compelled of necessity to remit this delightful part of public worship to a few

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\* Audiunt hæc adolescentuli hi, quibus psallendi in ecclesia officium est, Deo non voce sed corde cantandum; nec in tragædorum modum guttur et fauces dulci medicamine colliniendæ, ut in ecclesia theatrales moduli audiantur et cantica, sed in timore, in opere, in scientia scripturarum. Quamvis sit aliquis, ut solint illi appellare, *κακὸφωνος*, si bona opera habuerit, dulcis apud Deum cantor est, Sic cantet servus Christi, ut non vox canentis, sed verba placeant, quæ leguntur, ut spiritus malus, qui erat in Saule, ejiciatur ab his, qui similiter ab eo possidentur, et non introducatur in eos, qui de Dei domo scenam fecere populorum.

trained musicians, *ψαλταί*, *cantatores*, who in the fourth century became a distinct class of ecclesiastical officers.

3. *Choral singing*.—Gregory the Great, two hundred years later, undertook again the reformation of sacred music. Great attention was paid by him to the rhythm of sacred music, though regardless of poetical measure and rhyme. Both prose and poetry were sung in a peculiar chant by a choir of singers. But his music became so complicated, that a good proficient in music would scarcely master it by diligence and skill in less than ten years.<sup>7</sup>

For the cultivation of this style of sacred music, singing-schools were established, the leaders of which rose to great distinction. Instrumental accompaniments were introduced, and especially that of the organ; which was transferred from the theatre to the church as an instrument of sacred music.

Church music was thus a refined art of difficult attainment, and limited to a few professional singers. The congregation were by the exigencies of their condition excluded from all participation in it. The devotional tendency of sacred music was lost in the artistic style of its profane and secular airs. Thus, like our modern church, the ancient soon impaired the devotional tendency of sacred music by raising it above the congregation, and limiting it to an orchestra or a choir, as they did that of their prayers by restricting them to the cold and formal rehearsals of a prayer-book.

#### § 4. OF THE POWER OF SACRED MUSIC.

THE ancient fathers are singularly full and eloquent in praise of the moral power of their psalmody. "Nothing," says Chrysostom, "so lifteth up, and, as it were, wingeth the soul, so freeth it from earth, and looseth it from the chains of the body, so leadeth it unto wisdom, and a contempt of all earthly things, as the choral symphony of a sacred hymn set in harmonious measure."<sup>1</sup> Schöne has collected<sup>2</sup> several of these encomiums from Athanasius, Ambrose, Basil, and Ephraem the Syrian, which for felicity of thought and expression are hardly surpassed by any thing that the venerable fathers of the church have left to us. We must reluctantly omit them, and content ourselves with Herder's beautiful commendation of these ancient hymns. "Who can deny their influence and power over the soul? These sacred hymns of many hundred years' standing, and yet, at every repetition, still new and unimpaired in interest—what a blessing have they been to poor human nature! They

go with the solitary man into his cell, and attend the afflicted in distress, in want, and to the grave. While singing these, one forgets his toils, and his fainting, sorrowful spirit soars in heavenly joys to another world. Back to earth he comes, to labour, to toil, to suffer in silence, and to conquer. How rich the boon, how great the power of these hymns!" He proceeds to say that there is in these an efficacy and power which lighter songs, which philosophy itself can never have; a power which is not ascribable to any thing new or striking in sentiment or powerful in expression. And then raises the question, "Whence then have they this mighty power? what is it that so moves us?" To which he replies, *simplicity and truth*. "Embodying the great and simple truths of religion, they speak the sentiment of a universal creed—they are the expression of one heart and one faith. The greater part are suitable to be sung on all occasions, and daily to be repeated. Others are adapted to certain festivals; and as these return in endless succession, so the sacred song perpetually repeats the Christian faith. Though rude and void of refined taste, they all speak to the heart, and, by ceaseless repetition, sink deep the impress of truth. Like these, the sacred song should ever be the simple offering of nature, an incense of sweet odour, perpetually recurring, with a fragrance that suffers no abatement."<sup>3</sup> Such is the simple power of truth wrought in the soul by the hallowed devotions of the sanctuary. Striking the deepest principles of our nature, stirring the strongest passions of the heart, and mingling with our most tender recollections and dearest hopes, is it strange that the simple truths and rude air of the sacred song should deeply move us? So presented, they only grow in interest by continued repetition. And in the lapse of years, these time-hallowed associations do but sink deeper in the soul:

"Time but the impression stronger makes,  
As streams their channels deeper wear."

Chrysostom eloquently descants upon the power of music in the family. "Wheresoever ungodly songs are sung, there will the devils be gathered together; and wheresoever spiritual songs are sung, there will the grace of the Spirit fly, and sanctify both mouth and soul. I say these things, not only that ye yourselves may give praise, but that ye may teach both your wives and children to sing such songs when engaged at the loom, or in other labours; but especially at meat. Let us, with our wives and children, arise and say, 'Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy works: I will



triumph in the works of thy hands.' Let the psalm be followed by prayer, that our own souls and those of our household may be sanctified. Those who invite David with his harp, through him call Christ into their dwellings; and where Christ is, there no evil spirit dareth to approach or even cast a look. Thence will flow, as from a never failing fountain, peace, and love, and fulness of blessings. Make thou thy house a church; for a company of souls who love God, joined together in holy song and prayer, may well be called a church."<sup>4</sup>

Augustin gives the following account of the power of this music over him on the occasion of his baptism. "Oh, how freely was I made to weep by these hymns and spiritual songs; transported by the voices of the congregation sweetly singing. The melody of their voices filled my ear, and divine truth was poured into my heart. Then burned the sacred flame of devotion in my soul, and gushing tears flowed from my eyes, as well they might."<sup>5</sup>

#### § 5. OF ANCIENT HYMNS.

Two or three hymns appear to have come down to us from a remote antiquity. Basil, † A. D. 378, cites an evening hymn by some unknown author, which he describes as in his time very ancient, handed down from their fathers, and in use among the people. This, Dr. J. Pye Smith considers the oldest hymn extant. The following is his translation of the hymn:

"Jesus Christ, Joyful Light of the holy! Glory of the eternal, heavenly, holy, blessed Father! Having now come to the setting of the sun, beholding the evening light, we praise the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit of God. Thou art worthy to be praised of sacred voices at all seasons, O Son of God, who givest life. Wherefore the universe glorifieth thee."

Another is found in the works of Clemens Alexandrinus, who himself lived at the distance of only a century and a half from the age of the apostles. He gives it as the production of an age still higher. It is a hymn to Christ, and though exhibiting little poetical skill or taste, is worthy of particular notice, as perhaps the most ancient example extant of those sacred hymns which kindled the devotions of the primitive Christians. For this reason it is inserted in the note below.\*

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\* Στόμιον πῶλων ἀδαῶν,  
Πτερὸν ὀρνίθων ἀπλανῶν,

Frænum pullorum indocilium,  
Penna volucrum non errantium,

The *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, glory to God in the highest, the morning prayer of the Apostolical Constitutions, which, with some modifications, is still retained in the English and Roman Catholic liturgies, is generally assigned to the third century. By many it is regarded as the most ancient hymn that has descended to us from the Christian church. It is as follows:—

Ὅλας νηπίων ἀτρεκῆς,	Verus clavus infantium,
Ποιμὴν ἀρνῶν βασιλικῶν	Pastor agnorum regalium,
Τοὺς σοὺς ἀφελεῖς	Tuos simplices.
Παῖδας ἄγειρον,	Pueros congrega,
Αἰνεῖν ἀγίως,	Ad sancte laudandum :
Ἑμνεῖν ἀδόλως,	Sincere canendum
Ἀνάκοις στόμασιν	Ore innoxio
Παίδων ἡγήτορα Χριστόν.	Christum puerorum ducem.
Βασιλεῦ ἁγίων,	Rex sanctorum,
Λόγε πανδαμάτωρ	Verbum, qui domas omnia,
Πατὴρ ὑψίστου,	Patris altissimi,
Σοφίας πρύτανι,	Sapientiæ rector,
Στήριγμα πόνων	Laborem sustentaculum,
Αἰωνοχαρὲς,	Ævo gaudens,
Βροτέας γενεᾶς	Humani generis
Σῶτερ Ἰησοῦ,	Servator Jesu,
Ποιμὴν, ἀροτῆρ,	Pastor, arator,
Ὅλας, στώμιον,	Clavus, frænum,
Πτερὸν οὐράνιον	Penna cœlestis
Παναγοῦς ποιμένης	Sanctissimi gregis
Ἀλειῦ μερόπων	Piscator hominum,
Τῶν σωζομένων,	Qui salvi fiunt,
Πελάγους κακίας	Pelagi vitii
Ἰχθύς ἀγνοῦς	Pisces castos
Κύματος ἐχθροῦ	Unda ex infesta
Γλυκερῇ ζωῇ δελεάζων	Dulci vita inescans.
Ἠγοῦ, προβάτων	Sis dux, ovium
Λογικῶν ποιμὴν	Rationalium pastor :
Ἄγιε ἦγοῦ	Sancte, sis dux,
Βασιλεῦ παίδων ἀνεπάφων.	Rex puerorum intactorum.
Ἴχνια Χριστοῦ,	Vestigia Christi,
Ὀδὸς οἰρανία,	Vita cœlestis,
Λόγος ἀέναιος,	Verbum perenne,
Αἰὼν ἀπλετος,	Ævum infinitum,
Φῶς αἰδίου,	Lux æterna,
Ἐλέους πηγὴ,	Fons misericordiæ,
Ῥεκτὴρ ἀρετῆς	Operatrix virtutis,
Σεμνὴ βιοτῇ	Honesta vita,
Θεὸν ὑμνοῦντων, Χριστὲ Ἰησοῦ,	Deum laudantium Christe Jesu :
Γάλα οὐράνιον	Lac cœleste
Μαστῶν γλυκερῶν	Dulcibus uberibus

“We praise thee, we sing hymns to thee, we bless thee, we glorify thee, we worship thee, by thy great High-Priest; thou who art the true God, who art the One unbegotten, the only inaccessible Being. For thy great glory, O Lord, and heavenly King, O God, the Father Almighty, O Lord God, the Father of Christ, the immaculate Lamb, who taketh away the sin of the world, receive our prayer, thou that sittest upon the cherubim; since thou only art holy. Thou only, O Jesus, art our Lord, the Christ of the God of all that have been brought forth, of the God our King. Through this our Lord, glory be to thee, and honour and worship.”

A venerable antiquity, dating back even to the third century, is also assigned to the Evening Prayer and the Prayer at Dinner, from the same source.

*Evening Prayer.*—“We praise thee, we sing hymns to thee, we bless thee for thy great glory, O Lord, our King, the Father of Christ, the immaculate Lamb that taketh away the sin of the world. Praise becometh thee, hymns become thee, glory becometh thee, the God and Father, through the Son, in the most Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.”

*Prayer at Dinner.*—“Blessed art thou, O Lord, who dost nourish me from my youth; who givest food to all flesh. Fill our hearts with joy and gladness, that, having always what is sufficient for us, we may abound to every good work, in Christ Jesus, our Lord,

Νύμφης χαρίτων,  
Σοφίας τῆς σῆς ἐκδιβόμενον.  
Οἱ νηπίαχοι  
Ἀταλοῖς στόμασιν  
Ἀτιταλλόμενοι,  
Θηλῆς λογικῆς  
Πνεύματι δροσερῷ  
Ἐμπιπλάμενοι,  
Αἶνονς ἀφελεῖς,  
Ῥυθμους ἀτρεχεῖς,  
Βασιλεῖ Χριστῷ,  
Μισθοῦς ὁσίους  
Ζωῆς διδαχῆς,  
Μέλπωμεν ὁμοῦ,  
Μέλπωμεν ἀπλῶς,  
Παῖδα κρατερόν  
Χορὸς εἰρήνης  
Οἱ Χριστόγονοι,  
Λαὸς σώφρων,  
Ψάλλωμεν ὁμοῦ Θεὸν εἰρήνης.

Nymphæ Gratiarum,  
Sapientiæ tuæ expressum,  
Infantuli  
Ore tenero  
Enutriti,  
Mammæ rationalis  
Roscido spiritu  
Impleti,  
Laudes simplices,  
Hymnos veraces,  
Regi Christo,  
Mercedes sanctas  
Vitæ doctrinæ,  
Canamus simul.  
Canamus simpliciter  
Puerum valentem,  
Chorus pacis,  
Christo geniti,  
Populus modestus,  
Psallamus simul Deum pacis.

*Pæd. lib. iiii*

through whom glory, honour, and power be to thee for ever. Amen."

The most ancient hymns extant from the Latin church are those of Ambrose, of the fourth century. Thirty are ascribed to him, of which twelve are reputed to be genuine. The following is Bishop Mant's version of one of these hymns, of which the original is given in the note:—

Lord, who didst bless thy chosen band,  
And forth commission'd send,  
To spread thy name from land to land,  
To thee our hymns ascend.

The princes of thy church were they,  
Chiefs unsubdued by fight,  
Soldiers on earth of heaven's array,  
The world's renewing light.

Theirs the firm faith of holy birth,  
The hope that looks above,  
And, trampling on the powers of earth,  
Their Saviour's perfect love.

In them the heavens exulting own  
The Father's might reveal'd,  
Thy triumph gain'd, begotten Son,  
Thy Spirit's influence seal'd.

Then to thy Father, and to Thee,  
And to thy Spirit blest,  
All praise for these thy servants be  
By all thy church address.\*

\* *Æterna Christi munera  
Et martyrum victorias,  
Laudes ferentes debitas,  
Lætis canamus mentibus.*

*Ecclesiarum principes,  
Belli triumphales duces,  
Cælestis aulæ milites,  
Et vera mundi lumina.*

*Terrore victo sæculi  
Spretisque pœnis corporis,  
Mortis sacræ compendio,  
Vitam beatam possident.*

*Traduntur igni martyres,  
Et bestiarum dentibus,  
Armata sævit unguis  
Tortoris insani manus.*

*Nundata pendent viscera,  
Sanguis sacratus funditur,  
Sed permanent immobiles  
Vitæ perennis gratia.*

*Devota sanctorum fides,  
Invicta spes credentium;  
Perfecta Christi caritas,  
Mundi triumphat principem.*

*In his paterna gloria,  
In his voluntas filii,  
Exsultat in his Spiritus,  
Cælum repletur gaudiis.*

*Te nunc, redemptor, quæsumus,  
Ut ipsorum consortio  
Jungas precantes servulos,  
In sempiterna sæcula. Amen.*

The following are also mentioned among the hymns of Ambrose :

Vini Redemptor gentium,  
Ostende partum Virginis,  
Miretur omne sæculum ;  
Talis decet partus Deum, &c.

O Lux beata Trinitas  
Et principalis unitas,  
Jam sol recedet igneus,  
Infunde lumen cordibus, &c.

Illuminans altissimos  
Micantium astrorum globos,  
Pax, vita, lumen, veritas,  
Jesu fave precantibus, &c.

It may interest some readers to know the date of some of the ancient Latin hymns which were most frequently rehearsed. Among these are the following :

Of the fifth century—by Prudentius Clemens :

1. On the crowing of the cock—Ales diei nuntius, &c.
2. A morning hymn—Lux ecce surgit aurea, &c.
3. On the nativity—Corde natus ex parentis, &c.
4. On the Innocents—Salvete flores martyrum, &c.

Of the sixth century :

1. On the cross—Pange, lingua, gloriosi  
Prælium certaminis, &c.
2. On the Passion—Vexilla regis prodeunt  
Fulget crucis mysterium, &c.
3. On the Resurrection—Salve festa dies, toto venerabilis ævo, &c.

Gregory the Great, in the seventh century :

1. Lord's supper—Rex, Christe factor omnium, &c.
2. On the Lord's day—Primo dierum omnium, &c.
3. Morning hymn—Ecce jam noctis tenuatur umbra, &c.

In the age of Charlemagne—Veni Creator Spiritus, &c.

Robert, King of France, A. D. 1031.

Veni Sancte Spiritus,  
Et emitte cœlitus  
Lucis tuæ vadium, &c.

To the above should be added the Judgment hymn by the Franciscan, Thomas Von Celano, of the thirteenth century :

Dies iræ, dies illa,  
Solvat sæculum in favilla  
Teste David cum Sibylla,  
Tuba mirum spargens sonum,  
Per sepulchra regionum,  
Coget omnes dante thronum, &c.

And the Elegy of the Franciscan, Japonus, of the fourteenth century :

Stabat mater dolorosa,  
Juxta crucem lachrymosa, &c.



## CHAPTER XVII.

### OF THE USE OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES IN RELIGIOUS WORSHIP.

#### § 1. PRELIMINARY REMARKS.<sup>1</sup>

THE Christian church at first adopted, without essential variation, the Jewish form of worship in the reading of the Scriptures, which, after the Babylonish captivity, constituted an important part of religious service. The books of Moses were divided into fifty-four sections, corresponding to the sabbaths in a year, one being allowed for their intercalated years, in which there might be fifty-four sabbaths. These sections were read successively, one on each sabbath. When a less number of sabbaths occurred in a year, two sections were read together as one on the last sabbath, so that the reading of the whole might be completed every year.

Selections were also made from the historical and prophetical books, which were denominated the prophets. One of these selections was read every sabbath-day in connection with the corresponding portion of the law. This custom originated from the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, who forbade the Jews the reading of their law on the sabbath. They accordingly selected from the prophets certain portions which they read successively, in the place of like portions of the law. And after the persecution, they continued to read both in connection. Paul, at Antioch in Pisidia, stood up to preach after the reading of the law and the prophets. Acts xiii. 15.

The Psalms and other devotional parts of the Scriptures, which with the Jews constituted a *third division*, were probably not read at all on the sabbath. They were the *Psalter* of the Jewish synagogue, and were sung or chanted whenever introduced into religious worship.

Justin Martyr is the first who mentions the reading of the Gospels and of the Acts together with the Scriptures of the Old Testament.<sup>2</sup> According to this author, they were read in public assembly

on the sabbath, by a reader appointed for the purpose; and after the reading, an exhortation and exposition was delivered by the minister.

Tertullian also insists upon the reading of the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, as an important part both of public and of private worship.<sup>3</sup> He mentions the *commentatio literarum divinarum*, for the instruction and strengthening of the faithful, as the chief exercise of public worship.<sup>4</sup> In another treatise, the reading of the Scriptures, in connection with the singing of psalms, exhortations, *allocutiones*, are specified as the several parts of public worship.<sup>5</sup>

Both Tertullian and Cyprian speak of the reader, as an officer in the church, the latter of whom particularly describes the ordination of two readers to this office.<sup>6</sup>

The Apostolical Constitutions enjoin the reading of the Scriptures as the most important part of public worship. And Origen and Chrysostom insist upon this as the foundation of all correct religious service.<sup>7</sup> To these authorities, again, may be added those of various councils, on the same subject.<sup>8</sup>

As a general rule, none but the books which were received as canonical were allowed to be read in public worship. The reading of other books in private was recommended for personal edification, but not, like the Scriptures, as being of divine authority.<sup>9</sup> As in different provinces the church was divided in opinion respecting the true character of certain books, so they differed in regard to the propriety of permitting the same to be read in religious worship. The apocryphal books of the Old Testament, and the Antilegomena of the New, were chiefly the subject of dispute. The diligent perusal of the apocryphal books was recommended to catechumens, but their authority was seldom or never allowed in doctrinal discussions. These books were held in higher repute by the church in Africa than by any other.

The controversy relating to the Antilegomena, in a great measure ceased in the fourth century. The authority of the Apocalypse was, however, still controverted; and the churches of Constantinople, Antioch, and others continued to refuse it a place in the sacred canon.<sup>10</sup> Ephraem of Syria, Athanasius, Cyril of Alexandria, Pseudo-Dionysius, and Leontius of Byzantium, were apparently the first to remove the prejudice against this book.<sup>11</sup>

No distinction was made between the books of the Old and New Testament, but both were regarded as of equal authority, and in

religious worship selections from each were read in connection. The selections even in the *fourth* and *fifth* century were made by the bishops at pleasure; and on the festivals of the church, particular portions, especially from the New Testament, were read: all which indicates that a uniform order of liturgical worship had not yet been established. While both the Jewish and the Christian sabbath continued to be observed, it was customary on the former occasion to read the Old Testament; and on the latter, the New.<sup>12</sup>

The controverted portions of Scripture above mentioned, and other religious works, were frequently read in public on certain occasions; such as the Epistles of Peter, the Apocalypse, the Doctrines of the Apostles, the Shepherd of Hermas, the first epistle of Clemens Romanus to the Corinthians, the Homilies of the celebrated fathers, Public Symbols and Rules of Faith, and Memoirs of Martyrs and Saints.<sup>13</sup>

## § 2. OF THE ORDER IN WHICH THE SCRIPTURES WERE READ.

At first there was no established order for the reading of them. Before the canon of the new Testament was completed, no certain order was practicable. The divisions of the Old Testament by the Jews was not suited to Christian churches. It was accordingly left to the discretion of the bishops to direct the selections to be read, the canons of the church having established the divine authority of the several parts of the New Testament.

Even as late as the fourth and fifth centuries, instances occur of such appointments by the bishop.<sup>1</sup> In all matters pertaining to the church, usage has a great influence. The traditions of the apostles, and especially usages established by them, were very carefully observed. Every innovation was regarded with jealousy proportionate to the antiquity of the usage which it would supercede.

The canon of the New Testament was only gradually formed, and some time elapsed before it was completed. In the course of the second century, the four Gospels were received by the church in the form in which we now have them. On the contrary, the gospels of the heretics, as they were called, were rejected. At the close of the present period, (A. D. 254,) the Acts of the Apostles, the Thirteen Epistles of Paul, the Epistle to the Hebrews—which, however, only one part of the church considered as a work of Paul—and lastly, the First Epistle of John, and the First Epistle of Peter, had

been admitted into the canon. With regard to the canonical authority of the Second and Third Epistles of John, the Epistles of James, Jude, and Second of Peter, and lastly of the Book of Revelation, the opinions were yet for some time divided. On the other hand, some other writings, which are not now considered as forming a part of the canon, viz. the Epistles of Barnabas and Clement, and the Shepherd of Hermas, were held by some (especially Clement and Origen) in equal esteem with the Scriptures, and quoted as such.

“The Synod of Laodicea was held about the middle of the fourth century, between the years 360 and 364. In the fifty-ninth canon it was enacted that no uncanonical book should be used in the churches; and in the sixtieth a list was given of the canonical books. In this list, all the Hebrew writings of the Old Testament are received. The canon of the New Testament is the same as ours, except the Book of Revelation, which, however, was considered genuine, in Egypt, by Athanasius and Cyril.”

The earliest division of the New Testament was into the Gospels and the Apostles, corresponding to the law and the prophets of the Jewish Scriptures. This division appears in the writings of Tertullian and Irenæus,<sup>2</sup> and must, accordingly, have been anterior to their time. The reading was directed according to this division, one lesson from each being read alternately. Between the reading of these, Psalms were sung, or selections from the Old Testament were read. When there was nothing peculiar to direct the reading, the Scriptures were read consecutively, according to their established order; but this order was interrupted on the festivals of the church and other occasions.<sup>3</sup> At Easter, the account of the resurrection was read from each of the evangelists successively.<sup>4</sup> The season of Pentecost, from Easter to Whitsuntide, was set apart for the reading of the Acts of the Apostles.<sup>5</sup> The Western church connected with this the reading of the Epistles and of the Apocalypse.<sup>6</sup> During Lent, Genesis was read,<sup>7</sup> and, as early as the third century, the Book of Job was read in Passion-week. In a word, though we have no complete order of the lessons read through the year, it is to be presumed that the reading was directed by an established rule and plan, especially on all the principal festivals and solemnities of the church.

At the close of the lesson, the assembly kneeled and prayed for pardon of the sins of which they might have been guilty in the reading; saying, “Lord have mercy upon us.” Instead of this

prayer, however, other forms were frequently used; such as, "Thus saith the Lord," etc. The reading at the burial-service was ended with the exclamation, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."

### § 3. OF THE MODE OF DESIGNATING THE DIVISIONS AND LESSONS.

IN many manuscripts, these divisions are denoted by certain marks, like the masoretic notes in the Hebrew Scriptures. These, however, are not to be regarded as of necessity the most ancient divisions, for none of the manuscripts themselves have, in the opinion of critics, a higher antiquity than the fifth and sixth centuries, and most of them are of an origin much later. But it is worthy of remark that the ancient versions, which date back to a much higher antiquity than any manuscripts now extant, and from which, almost without exception, the lessons were read, are also divided in the same manner. Such for example are the divisions of the Syriac Peshito. From all which, it is probable that these divisions were made as early as the second century. According to this method, the New Testament was divided into two kinds of chapters, some longer and some shorter. The divisions, however, were not uniform in the different churches, and were subject to revision from time to time.<sup>1</sup>

To prevent misunderstanding, it was customary to refer to texts of Scripture by quoting a few words of the passage in question, or by a description of it, thus: As it is said in the parable of the sower,—or, As it is written in the passage relating to the woman that had an issue, etc.

The division into chapters was singularly indiscreet and injudicious, often sadly interrupting the sense and sundering parts of the text, which ought to be closely united in the same paragraph or verse.\* This division was the work of Hugo de Sancto Caro, in the thirteenth century. The New Testament was first divided into verses in the edition of Robert Stephens, A. D. 1551.

### § 4. OF THE MANNER IN WHICH THE SCRIPTURES WERE READ, AND OF OTHER EXERCISES IN CONNECTION.

CERTAIN portions of the Scripture, as has been already remarked, were sung, others were recited or read. The Psalms were uniformly

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\* In the last century, an anonymous writer published the following calculation, similar to that of the Masorites, for the English version of the Bible, under the



sung, and from the time of Gregory the Great, the same was true of the Gospels and the Epistles. All other parts of the Scriptures were read; but the mode of reading was very unlike that in common use; it was indeed a recitative or chant; each syllable was uttered with a measured cadence and modulation, in a style and manner midway between that of singing and ordinary reading. In the East especially was this art of chanting greatly cultivated; and the Koran, to this day is thus read.

It was a prevailing sentiment of the oriental church, that the words of the Most High ought to be pronounced in a higher and

title of the *Old and New Testament Dissected*. It is said to have occupied three years of the compiler's life, and is a singular instance of the trifling employments to which superstition has led mankind.

*The Old and New Testament Dissected.*

Books in the Old.....	39.....	In the New.....	27.....	Total.....	66
Chapters.....	929.....		260.....		1,189
Verses.....	23,214.....		7,959.....		31,173
Words.....	592,439.....		181,253.....		773,692
Letters.....	2,728,800.....		838,380.....		3,566,480

*Apocrypha.*

Chapters.....	183
Verses.....	6,081
Words.....	252,185

The middle chapter and least in the Bible, is Psalm 117.

The middle verse is the eighth of the 118th Psalm.

The middle time, 2d of Chronicles, 4th chapter, 16th verse.

The word *And* occurs in the Old Testament 35,543 times.

The same word occurs in the New Testament 10,684 times.

The word *Jehovah* occurs 6855 times.

*Old Testament.*

The middle book is Proverbs.

The middle chapter is Job 29th.

The middle verse is the 2d Chronicles, 20th chapter, between the 17th and 18th verses.

The least verse is 1st Chronicles, 1st chapter, and 25th verse.

*New Testament.*

The middle book is Thessalonians 2d.

The middle chapter is between the 13th and 14th Romans.

The middle verse is in chapter 17th of Acts, 17th verse.

The least verse is 11th chapter of John, 35th verse.

The 21st verse of the 7th chapter of Ezra has all the letters of the alphabet except *j*.

The 19th chapter of the 2d of Kings and the 37th of Isaiah are alike.

more joyful strain than that of common conversation and reading. On this interesting point it is to be regretted that so little is known. The ancient art of chanting the Scriptures was perpetuated by tradition, and only some slight traces of it can now be observed in the Greek, Roman, and Protestant churches.

Augustin, the great rhetorician and musician of the ancient church, contends earnestly for an easy, simple, and unstudied style of psalmody, and commends highly the singing of Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, which more resembled the performance of a reader than of a singer.<sup>1</sup> In accordance with this author, the approved style of conducting the services of the church seems to have been to conform the exercise of singing as nearly as possible to that of reading; and the reading, to that of singing. The style was much the same both in the Jewish synagogue and the Greek church. In both, the rehearsals were so rapid, that it would be difficult to determine whether it most resembled that of singing or of reading.

The reading was begun and closed with a set form. The reader, according to Cyprian, saluted the audience by saying, "Peace be with you." This prerogative was by the third Council of Carthage, A. D. 397, denied to the reader, as belonging exclusively to the presbyter or bishop.<sup>2</sup> Then again, it became the usual salutation at the opening of public worship and before the sermon.

Before the reading began, the deacon enjoined silence, and often called aloud again, *προσχαμεν*, *attendamus*, *attention!* Then the reader proceeded, saying, "Thus saith the Lord in the lesson from the Old Testament, or from the Gospels," etc., or again, "Beloved brethren, in the Epistles it is written." This was said to awaken attention and veneration for the word read.<sup>3</sup>

At the close of the lesson, the people responded frequently, if not uniformly, by saying, "Amen." The purport of which was, according to Alexander Halesius, "God grant us to continue steadfast in the faith." Or they said, "We thank thee, Lord;" "We thank thee, O Christ,"—for the previous word. Such abuses finally arose from this custom, that the people were forbidden to join in the response, and the minister closed the reading of the epistles by saying, "Blessed be God," and that of the evangelists by saying, "Glory be to thee, O Lord."<sup>4</sup>

Whenever the deacon, presbyter, or bishop, performed the office of reader, he introduced the service by a form which was substantially, the same as that which is still observed in the Episcopal service.

At first the reading was performed from the *ambo*, a pulpit or desk, prepared for the purpose; afterward the reading was from the *pulpit*, with the exception of that of the Gospels and the Epistles which, out of reverence for these parts of Scripture, were rehearsed near the *altar*; the former on the *right hand*, and the latter on the *left*, of the altar. It was the duty of the *subdeacon* to read or chant the Epistles; and of the *deacon* to rehearse the Gospels.

The reader was at all times required to stand in the discharge of his office; the people preserved the same attitude in the rehearsal of the Psalms, and the reading of the lessons from the Gospels and the Epistles at the celebration of their festivals. Cyprian represents this to have been, on all occasions, the custom in Africa. The Apostolical Constitutions recommend both the clergy and the people to stand in profound silence during the reading of the *Gospels*.<sup>5</sup> Augustin urges all who are lame, or afflicted with any infirmity, so that they cannot conveniently stand, to sit and reverently listen to the word of God.<sup>6</sup> But it was a general rule of the ancient church, which has at all times been observed, and still is to some extent, that the hearers sat during the ordinary reading of the Scriptures, and arose when the Gospels were recited. If in the delivery of a sermon the preacher introduced a passage from the Gospels, the assembly immediately arose; which was the frequent occasion of much noise and confusion. The reason for this usage in relation to the Gospels is given by Chrysostom as follows:—"If the letters of a king are read in the theatre with great silence, much more ought we to compose ourselves, and reverently to arise and listen when the letters, not of an earthly king, but of the Lord of angels, are read to us."<sup>7</sup>

Jerome, of the fourth and fifth century, is the first who mentions the custom of burning lighted candles in the Eastern church, though not in the Western, when the Gospels were read.<sup>8</sup> But all antiquity offers no earlier conclusive authority for this unmeaning superstition, which is still observed, not only in the Romish church, but in the Lutheran churches on the continent. The authorities for this rite, as given by Jerome, are the lighting of lamps by the virgins in the Gospel, the exhortation to have our loins girded and our lamps burning, together with such passages as the following: Luke xii. 35; John v. 35; Ps. cxix. 105.

## § 5. OF THE PSALTER.

THE use of the Psalter as a system of psalmody is an imitation of the synagogue and temple service. The usage is of great antiquity, and very general, both in the ancient and modern church. But the Psalter also partook very much of the character of a symbolical book, and constituted an essential part of the liturgy of the church. It contains appropriate lessons for reading, and religious formularies, suited to the capacities of the youth and of the people generally. These, the clergy were required to commit to memory, and to explain.<sup>1</sup> Such indeed was the consideration in which it was held, that it was styled the Bible in miniature, a manual of all sacred things, and a representative of the Sacred Scriptures.<sup>2</sup> Even in the dark ages, when men were denied the use of the Bible, the Psalter was allowed to the laity generally.<sup>3</sup>

The Psalms were very early introduced as a constituent part of religious worship, and were variously numbered and divided; sometimes into five books, corresponding to the books of Moses; and again they were arranged in different classes according to their character, as Hallelujah, Baptismal, Penitential Psalms, and many others.

## § 6. OF THE PERICOPÆ.

It has been before remarked that particular lessons were set apart from the Gospels and Epistles, to be read on certain sabbaths and special festive occasions. The custom was derived from the Jews, who were accustomed to read different portions of their Scriptures on their several festivals. These specific selections from the writings of the New Testament were denominated *Pericopæ*. When these selections were first made, is a question on which the learned are greatly divided. Some contend that they are of apostolic origin; others that they originated in the fourth century; and others again, date them back no farther than the eighth century. For a discussion of these several theories, the reader is referred to Augusti, and to the authorities quoted by him.

To aid those who could not read, pictures of Scripture scenes were also hung upon the walls. In the idolatrous devotion with which popish superstition bows down before the images and paintings of the sainted dead, the intelligent reader will easily discover

only a perversion of the pure intents for which primitive piety first introduced them into the ancient churches.

These remarks respecting the use of images are particularly applicable to the Christians of the fourth and fifth centuries. Previous to this period, pictorial representations of all kinds were generally repudiated, but in the sixth century the superstitious perversions of such works of art had already begun.

The taste for pictorial representations and images was a corruption of paganism, an imitation of the ornaments of its temples. It may be said to have begun with Constantine. As a substitute for embellishments of pagan art, he lavished on the public monuments, with which he adorned the imperial city, representations of scenes from the Scriptures, such as Abraham offering up Isaac, Daniel in the lions' den, Christ as the Good Shepherd, &c. Constantia, the sister of Constantine, sought to obtain an image of Christ. At Rome, the images of the apostles Peter and Paul attending Christ were painted upon the walls.

Similar representations of scenes in sacred history adorned the dress of Christian women, such as the marriage-feast at Cana, the man sick of the palsy, the blind restored to sight, Mary Magdalene embracing the feet of Jesus, the resurrection of Lazarus. Asterius, in the latter part of the fourth century, severely censured these ornaments, admonishing Christian women, that instead of wearing a kneeling penitent in embroidery, they might more fitly mourn over their own sins with a penitent spirit.

Augustin and Chrysostom inveighed against images in churches in such terms as clearly show that many had already begun to make them objects of religious worship. John of Damascus, A. D. 750, defended the worship of images. The Synod of Constantinople, A. D. 754, decided against the worship of images; the second Synod of Nice, A. D. 787, pronounced in favour of it. These data indicate the progress of degeneracy in the worship of images, of saints, and martyrs, and of the virgin, all which were closely connected.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

### OF HOMILIES.<sup>1</sup>

#### § 1. GENERAL REMARKS, NAMES, ETC.

EVERY religious discourse, almost without exception, was based on some text, or distinctly related to some passage of Scripture. It aimed at nothing more than to explain and enforce the same. In the Latin church, instances frequently occur of sermons without any text, but they had reference distinctly to the Scripture lesson which had just been read, which is sometimes cited, and at others is passed over in silence. But in either case the discourse is a paraphrase or explanation of the passage in question. A sermon, according to the idea of the ancient church, may be defined to be *a rhetorical discourse upon some passage of Scripture, having for its object the spiritual edification of the hearers. It is an exposition and application of Scripture*, not merely a religious discourse designed for the instruction of the audience.

This discourse was called by different names, as λόγος, *an oration*, ὁμιλία, *a homily*: the latter implies a more familiar discourse than the former. When the deacon officiated in the place of the bishop, his discourse was frequently denominated κήρυγμα. It was also styled διδασκαλία, ἐξήγησις, ἐκθεσις, etc. In the Latin church it was styled *tractatus, disputatio, allocutio*.

The modern divisions and parts of a sermon, such as the introduction, the proposition, the illustration and application, were totally unknown *in form*, to the ancient fathers. The strife then was, as Gregory Nazianzen justly observes, not about *terms*, but *doctrines*.

Mosheim asserts that the sermon was not at first a necessary part of religious worship. In answer to this absurd hypothesis it must be admitted that the discourses of Christ and his apostles were not indeed homilies like those of Chrysostom and Augustin, but they resemble these much more than they do the catechetical in-

structions of Cyril and Gregory Nazianzen, to say nothing of our Lord's sermon on the mount, which may truly be regarded as a pattern for a formal discourse. The same may also be said of most of the discourses of Peter and Paul, as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles.

We may also, with propriety, refer to all those passages which relate to the usage of Jewish worship in their synagogues, according to which that portion of Scripture which had been read was made the subject of discourse. Luke iv. 16; Matt. iv. 23; xiii. 54; Acts xiii. 15-27; xv. 21; 2 Cor. iii. 15, etc: from all which it appears that a discourse based on the Scriptures was an essential part of the worship of the Jews. The first instance of such on record is in the eighth chapter of Nehemiah. The homilies of the Christian church were only an imitation of these discourses in the synagogue, from which they were derived.<sup>2</sup> The discourses of the apostles were either based on some specific portions of Scripture, or else they were an abstract of sacred history. Instances of the former class are found in Acts i. 15; ii. 14-36; of the latter, Acts vii. 2-53; xvii. 22-31; Acts xxii. and xxiii.

For further illustration we may refer to 2 Tim. iii. 14-17, and to the miraculous gift of *prophesying*, i. e. of teaching, which is mentioned in 1 Cor. xii. 28, 29; Eph. iv. 11. The churches to whom the apostles addressed their epistles were required to have them read in public, accompanied, no doubt, with suitable explanations and applications, Col. iv. 16; 1 Thess. v. 27; 2 Peter iii. 15, 16.

Justin Martyr expressly asserts, that "certain selections from the *prophets* and *memoirs* of the apostles were not only read, but *explained* and *enforced*." By the prophets and memoirs, he evidently means the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. "After the reading is ended, the minister of the assembly makes an address in which he admonishes and exhorts the people to imitate the virtues which it enjoins."<sup>3</sup> This is the first mention made in ecclesiastical history of a Christian sermon.

So also Tertullian, in the second century: "We come together to acquaint ourselves with the sacred Scriptures, and to hear what, according to the circumstances of the present time, may be applicable to us, either now or at any future time. At least, we establish our faith, we encourage our hope, we assure our confidence; and, by the injunctions of the divine word, we make its life-giving power efficacious to our hearts. We admonish and reprove one another, and give ourselves up to the teachings of the divine word. And this

word of God has the greater weight, because each regards himself as standing in the presence of God."<sup>4</sup> Who can doubt that this extract describes the office of the preacher as an essential part of public worship.

This duty is also specified in the Apostolical Constitutions: "When the gospel is read, let all the elders and deacons, and the whole assembly stand in silence. Afterward, let the elders, one by one, but not all of them, exhort the people; and lastly, let the bishop, as the master, address them."<sup>5</sup> Again, they speak of the bishop as "the preacher of the word of God," and as preaching to the people the things pertaining to their salvation.<sup>6</sup>

Again, the notes of Peter's addresses to the people which Clemens Romanus has left, are proof positive to the point in dispute, provided they are genuine;<sup>7</sup> but they are confessedly of doubtful authority. Enough, however, has been said to show that a sermon or homiletic address was, in the first and second centuries, a part of public worship. In regard to this point at a later period, there can be no question.

## § 2. OF THOSE BY WHOM THE HOMILIES WERE DELIVERED.

JUSTIN MARTYR informs us, that after the reading, *the president* of the assembly, ὁ πρεστώς, makes an application of the word, *νουθεσίαν καὶ πρόκλησιν ποιεῖται*, and exhorts to an imitation of the virtues which it inculcates.<sup>1</sup> This passage distinctly ascribes to the presiding minister the duty of explaining and applying the Scriptures which were read. And the same is manifest from the whole history of the ancient church. To preach, or as Ambrose expresses it, *to teach the people*, was uniformly the bishop's duty. The case of Ambrose himself is a clear illustration of this duty. He was promoted from a civil office to that of bishop, without having even been baptized as a catechumen; and, in view of his unpreparedness, sought in vain to excuse himself from the discharge of this part of his duties, alleging that he had need himself to learn, instead of teaching others. But, as he himself confesses, he was obliged to begin to teach before he had himself been a learner.<sup>2</sup>

The distinction between *ruling* and *teaching* elders resulted simply from the circumstance that, in those trying times, men were sometimes required to manage the concerns of the church who yet were not qualified to act as preachers; and a competent teacher was not always suited to direct the affairs of the church. But the

office of a *ruling elder* who did not teach, was regarded as an exception to a general rule—as an extraordinary provision for a peculiar emergency, while the office of preaching was accounted the most honourable and important part of the bishop's duties. "Far from this seat," says Chrysostom, "let him be removed who knows not how to teach sound doctrine as he ought."<sup>3</sup> The neglect of this duty is, by the Apostolical Canons, c. 58, to be punished with suspension and removal from office.

There is, indeed, no case on record, of a bishop who was removed for his inability to teach; but there are many in which the bishops were disregarded and neglected for this cause. Such was the case of Alexander, bishop of Alexandria, and Atticus, bishop of Constantinople.<sup>4</sup> On the contrary, they who excelled in this duty were held in the highest consideration, as Gregory Nazianzen, Chrysostom, Augustin, etc.

The deacon and even the presbyter officiated only as *substitutes* of the bishop in case of his absence or inability from sickness or other causes. Both Augustin and Chrysostom preached for their bishops in this capacity.<sup>5</sup> In such cases the bishop was held responsible for what was said by his substitute, of which we have a striking instance in the history of Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople.

From all this we are not, however, to conclude that the right to preach was restricted *under all circumstances*, to the bishops alone. For how, in that case, were the churches which had no bishop to be supplied with the preaching of the word of God? In all such cases the presbyter occupied the place, and discharged the duties of the bishop; and in his absence or failure, the deacon supplied his place; *not, however, by delivering an original discourse*, but by reading one from the fathers. The Apostolical Canons, c. 58, require the bishop or the presbyter to deliver the sermon, and exact upon both the same penalty for neglect of duty.

In times of persecution, *presbyters* and *deacons* were entrusted with the office of preaching. Still, the *deacon* was regarded only as an assistant, like a licentiate or candidate for the sacred office. Origen, in Palestine, was invited "by the bishops to expound the sacred Scriptures publicly in the church, although he had not yet attained the priesthood by the imposition of hands."<sup>6</sup> From Justin Martyr it would seem that freedom of remark was allowed to all laymen in social worship, and Hilary explicitly declares that

it was the common privilege of all, first to teach and then to baptize.\*

Laymen who had not received ordination were not allowed to preach, but there are instances on record, notwithstanding, of such permission being granted to them under certain circumstances.<sup>7</sup>

But the apostolic rule forbidding a woman to teach was most cautiously observed.<sup>8</sup> The Montanists are, indeed, an exception to this remark, but Tertullian, himself one of this sect, complains of this abuse.<sup>9</sup> The fourth Council of Carthage forbid both the laity and women to teach in public. "Let no laymen teach in the presence of the clergy."<sup>10</sup> "Let no woman, however learned or pious, presume to teach the other sex in public assembly."<sup>11</sup>

### § 3. OF THE FREQUENCY OF SERMONS.

It has already been stated that the sermon consisted originally in an explanation and application of the Scripture lessons which had just been read. Sermons were, therefore, as a general rule, as frequent as the reading of the Scriptures. If, in any instance, a sermon was delivered without any foregoing lesson from the Scriptures, it was an exception to the general rule. In some cases, several sermons were delivered by different speakers in succession at the same meeting. At other times, several were delivered by the same speaker on the same day.<sup>1</sup> Sermons were an appropriate part of every form of public worship, but they were especially designed for the catechumen; and for this reason were a part of the services designed for them.<sup>2</sup> The frequency with which they were delivered varied greatly in different countries and dioceses. They were expected of course on the Sabbath, frequently on Saturday, *i. e.* both on the Jewish and Christian Sabbath, especially while both days were observed in connection, as was customary until the fourth century. A sermon was also essential to a due celebration of the festivals of the church. During the fifty festive days from Easter to Whitsunday, a sermon from the Acts of the Apostles was delivered each day, in the oriental churches; and also on each day of Lent. Afterward they became less frequent, but were still delivered on fast-days. On other occasions they were delivered in the afternoon. A sermon was also delivered at some time during the middle of the week; usually on Friday.

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\* Primum omnes docebant et baptizabant.—*In Eph.* xv. 12.



Instances also occur in the writings of the fathers, of sermons for the forenoon and for afternoon.<sup>3</sup> But it does not appear to have been a uniform arrangement. No better evidence of the consideration in which this part of religious worship was held can be given, than the fact that Julian the Apostate, in his endeavours to restore idolatry, recommended the pagan priests to imitate the Christian preachers by delivering similar discourses.

#### § 4. OF THE LENGTH OF TIME ALLOTTED FOR THE DELIVERY OF THE SERMON.

THIS does not appear to have been determined by any canon or rule of custom. It appears rather to have been regulated by times and circumstances. Sermons were, however, much shorter in the Latin than in the Greek church. Some conjecture as to their length may be formed from the circumstance that more than one was delivered in succession; and yet it is remarkable that some of the longest sermons which remain to us were delivered in churches where this custom prevailed. Some of Chrysostom's must have occupied two hours in the delivery, although this was the usual time for the whole service, as Chrysostom himself asserts.<sup>1</sup> Bingham is of opinion that the sermons of the fathers could not have been an hour in length; most of the sermons of the Latin fathers, according to him, could not have occupied one half hour, and many not ten minutes.<sup>2</sup>

Like the ancient orators, the preacher is supposed to have spoken by an hour-glass, a water-clock, or a sand-glass.

#### § 5. OF THE POSITION OF THE SPEAKER.

IN many countries the speaker habitually occupied an elevated desk in the *body* of the house, which was also used for the reading, and for various exercises. In other places this was used by the speaker occasionally, but not habitually. Chrysostom and Augustin were accustomed to speak from this place, that they might more easily be heard by the immense multitudes that thronged to listen to them.

The custom originally was for the preacher to speak either from the bishop's seat or from before the altar, and behind the lattice that separated the sanctuary or shrine from the body of the house;<sup>1</sup> but most frequently from the former place, which, as Augustin

says, was an elevated throne, that from it the bishop might watch his flock, as the vintager does his vineyard from his watch-tower.

At a later period, when the care of the church became more cumbersome, and the bishops began to neglect or omit the duty of preaching, the deacons became the moderators of the assembly, and the preacher occupied the desk of the reader. This position was, of necessity, allotted to the preacher in the vast Gothic cathedrals which were erected in the Middle Ages.

Sermons were frequently delivered in other places besides the church; but this was an exception to the general rule. The eulogies of the martyrs were usually delivered in the exedræ, baptisteries, cemeteries, etc. The monks frequently preached from the trees, and the top of a post or pillar.

§ 6. OF THE ATTITUDE OF THE SPEAKER, MODE OF DELIVERY,  
DEPORTMENT OF THE AUDIENCE, ETC.

IN regard to the attitude both of the speaker and of the audience during the delivery of the sermon, the ancient custom was precisely the reverse of the modern. In the primitive church it was customary for the speaker to sit, and for the audience to stand. As in attending to the reading of the Scriptures they stood, in token of reverence for the word of God, so in listening to the sermon, in which it was explained and enforced, for the same reason they preserved a similar attitude. To this, however, there were exceptions, and the usage was different in different places. In Africa the custom above mentioned was observed with great care. Augustin insists often upon it, and rebukes every departure from it except in cases of infirmity, which rendered it inconvenient for the hearer to preserve this attitude. At one time he apologizes for the inconvenient length of his sermon, especially inasmuch as he is permitted to *sit*, while they are required to *stand*.

The hearers of Gregory Nazianzen and Chrysostom preserved the same posture. It is related even of Constantine the Great, that he did not resume his seat during a long sermon by Eusebius, and that all the assembly followed his example.<sup>1</sup> From all which it is fairly inferred that this was the prevailing custom. Compare Luke ii. 46; iv. 20; v. 3; John viii. 2; Matt. v. 1; etc.

The hearers, it would seem, were accustomed to take great liberties in regard to their attendance upon public worship, and often demeaned themselves very unworthily. At one time, they would

absent themselves from the service except during the sermon—an irregularity against which Chrysostom inveighs with great spirit.<sup>2</sup> At other times, they treated even the preaching with great indifference and neglect,<sup>3</sup> complaining bitterly of long sermons, and even left the house while the preacher was yet speaking. To prevent this, the doors were ordered to be fastened after the reading and before the sermon,<sup>4</sup> as is still the custom in Sweden. The fourth Council of Carthage<sup>5</sup> forbade this contempt of the preacher under pain of excommunication.

Another impropriety, of which Chrysostom complains with his accustomed spirit, is that of disturbing the preacher by needless noise and frivolous conversation: the loquacity of the women and the wantonness of the young people are among his subjects of complaint. Similar complaints are made by others, particularly by preachers in the large cities, Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria, Carthage, etc.

The indecent custom was also introduced into the ancient church of applauding the speaker by acclamations, by clapping, waving of handkerchiefs, and other similar customs, which disgraced the ancient theatres, as they still do the modern. A multitude of examples may be found in the references;<sup>6</sup> but the custom was severely censured.<sup>7</sup>

“Of what avail to me is this applause and tumult? One thing only I require of you—that ye prove to me your approbation and obedience by your works. That will be praise for me—gain for yourselves; that will be to me a greater honour than the imperial crown. I desire not your applause and clamour. I have but one wish—that you hear me with calmness and attention, and that ye practise my precepts. For this is not a theatre: ye sit not here to behold actors and to confer upon such men your applause. Here is the place to learn the things of God.”<sup>8</sup>

The ancient Christians had also the custom of taking notes and writing out at length the sermons which they heard. To this laudable custom we owe many of the sermons of the fathers which have come down to us. It was not, however, a universal practice.<sup>9</sup> Sermons in which the hearer took little interest, he was not careful to retain in this manner. Some preachers refused to have their sermons preserved in this imperfect manner. Origen allowed no notes to be taken of his sermons until he was sixty years of age.<sup>10</sup>

## § 7. OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SERMON.

IN the Middle Ages it became customary for the preacher to draw his topics of discourse from Aristotle; but this strange custom has not the least authority from the practice of the early fathers. Not only did the Bible furnish them their text and subject of discourse, but, as has been already observed, they confined themselves strictly to the duty of expounding the sacred Scriptures. "To the word and the testimony," says Augustin, "for I perform the office not merely of a *preacher*, but of a *reader* also; so that this my discourse may be supported by the authority of the sacred word. If my recollection fails me, far be it from me to build upon the sand by human reasoning. Hear, therefore, the gospel according to John: 'Verily, verily, I say unto you,' " etc.<sup>1</sup>

Nothing like the modern division of a sermon into separate heads was formally practised by the ancients. This mode of division was borrowed from the schoolmen. But the ancient fathers confined themselves strictly to their text, and contented themselves with the explication of it, or quickly returned to it again if at any time they allowed themselves in a digression.

It was a fundamental principle with them that the truths of Christianity possessed their own intrinsic force, and needed not the aid of eloquence or of art. It was also their usual custom to speak *extempore*. And, for this twofold reason, their sermons were generally devoid of ornament. The ability to speak extemporaneously as occasion might require, and without previous study, was indispensable to an acceptable discharge of the duties of a preacher. His popularity was proportionate to his success in this art of speaking. For this reason the fathers were influenced to cultivate this art with so much success that, even as late as the fourth and fifth centuries, they fancied themselves to be assisted by the miraculous gifts of the Spirit. "I could not have spoken thus *by myself*," says Chrysostom, "but God, foreseeing the result, τὰ μέλλοντα προειδότης, dictated those words." Augustin and Gregory the Great also express similar sentiments.<sup>2</sup> At the same time it is sufficiently evident that they did not so rely upon the aid of the Spirit as to excuse themselves from careful study, and from preparation according to the best of their ability. They expected his aid rather as a blessing upon their labours and studies, and in answer to their prayers.

Whether the fathers spoke wholly without notes and committed to memory their discourses, is not so easy to determine. No general rule prevailed on this point. Many examples may be found in which the sermons of celebrated preachers *were read*—in some cases indeed by the deacon, (on whom it devolved to conduct the meeting in the absence of the regular preacher,) but in others, they were either read or dictated by the author himself. Augustin, in one of his sermons, complains that he is embarrassed by *his notes*, and entreats the audience to aid him by their prayers.\* Gregory the Great also complains of the difficulty of speaking from his notes, and of inattention and want of interest on the part of his hearers, and for these reasons resolves to speak without notes, *contrary to his usual custom*.† The prevailing mode of speaking, however, was evidently without notes.

The speaker usually began with a short invocation to God for his aid, and closed his discourse with a benediction—Peace be with you—or something to that effect.<sup>3</sup> Every address, says Optatus, is made to begin and end with God.<sup>4</sup> But long and formal prayers, such as in modern times precede and follow the sermon, were not offered in that connection. To every sermon, whether in the Greek, Syriac, or Latin church, there was affixed the customary doxology: “To God through Jesus Christ his Son, our Lord who lives and reigns with him, world without end. Amen.” We subjoin, as quoted by Bingham from Ferrarius, the prayer which St. Ambrose was wont to offer for himself before rising to address the assembly:

“I beseech thee, O Lord, and earnestly entreat thee, give me an humble knowledge which may edify. Give me a meek and prudent eloquence, which knows not how to be puffed up, or vaunt itself upon its own worth and endowments above that of its brethren. Put into my mouth, I beseech thee, the word of consolation, and edification, and exhortation, that I may be able to exhort those that are good to go on to greater perfection, and reduce those that walk perversely to the rule of thy righteousness, both by my word and by my example. Let the words which thou givest to thy

\* Quoniam video disputationes graphio, ceraque ligari, et nequaquam sumus idonei lectitare, adjuvate me ipsum, quæso, intercessu vestro.—Serm. 6, *De Sanctis*.

† Multis vobis lectionibus, fratres carissimi, *per dictatum loqui consuevi*; sed quia, lasiente stomacho, ea quæ dictaverim, legere non possum, et quosdam vestrum minus libenter audientes intueor; unde nunc a meipso exigere volo contra morem meum, ut inter sacra missarum solemnia lectionem S. Evangelii, *non dictando*, sed colloquendo edisseram.—GREGOR. M. *Hom. Serm.* 21.



servant be as the sharpest darts, and burning arrows which may penetrate and inflame the minds of my hearers to thy fear and love."<sup>5</sup>

#### § 8. OF THE SUBJECTS OF DISCOURSE BY THE FATHERS.

It is very justly remarked by Bingham, that their topics of discourse were of a grave and serious character. Their object was to instruct, to edify, and to improve the hearer. The leading subjects of their discourses are described by Gregory Nazianzen and Chrysostom. "To me it seems," says Gregory, "to require no ordinary qualifications of mind rightly to divide the word of truth,—to give to every one a portion in due measure, and discreetly to discourse of the great doctrines of our faith: to treat of the universe of worlds—of matter and of mind—of the soul and of intelligent beings, good and bad—to treat of a superintending and ruling Providence, controlling with unerring wisdom all things, both those that are within, and those that are above human comprehension—to treat of the first formation and of the restoration of man, of the two covenants, and of the types of the Old and antitypes of the New Testament—of Christ's first and second coming, of his incarnation and passion, of the resurrection, of the end of the world, of the day of judgment, of the rewards of the just, and the punishment of the wicked: and, above all, of the blessed Trinity, which is the principal article of the Christian faith."<sup>1</sup>

In like manner, Chrysostom, in reminding his hearers of the leading topics of religious discourse which all who frequent the house of God expect and demand, enumerates the following:—"The nature of the soul, of the body, of immortality, of the kingdom of heaven, of hell and of future punishment—of the long-suffering of God, of repentance, baptism, and the pardon of sin—of the creation of the world above and the world below—of the nature of men and of angels—evil spirits and of the wiles of Satan—of the constitution of Christian society, of the true faith and deadly heresies. With these and many other such like subjects must the Christian minister be acquainted, and be prepared to speak on them as occasion may require."

#### § 9. OF THE HOMILIES IN THE EASTERN AND WESTERN CHURCHES.

THE homilies of the Eastern and Western churches were essentially different in several characteristics, which are specified in an-

other work,<sup>1</sup> and which are briefly recapitulated—the period under consideration being about two hundred years, from the third to the fifth centuries.

### I. Homilies in the Eastern church.

1. Origen introduced that allegorical mode of interpreting the Scriptures, which, while it affected to illustrate, continued, for a long time, to darken the sacred page. Not content with a plain and natural elucidation of the historical sense of the text, it sought for some hidden meaning, darkly shadowed forth in allegorical, mystical terms.

2. The sermons of the period under consideration were occupied with profitless polemical discussions and speculative theories.

The question with the preacher seems too often to have been, not what will produce the fruits of holy living, and prepare the hearer for eternity; but how the opinions of another can best be controverted; worthless dogmas, it may be, deserving no serious consideration.

3. The preachers of this period claimed most undeserved respect for their own authority.

Flattered by the great consideration in which they were held, and the confidence in which the people waited on them for instruction, they converted the pulpit into a stage for the exhibition of their own pertinacity, ignorance, and folly.

4. The sermons of this period were as faulty in style as they were exceptionable in the other characteristics which have been mentioned.

Not only was the simplicity which characterized the teachings of Christ and his apostles, in a great measure lost, in absurd and puerile expositions of Scripture, and corrupted by the substitution of vain speculations, derived especially from the Platonic philosophy, but the style of the pulpit was in other respects vitiated and corrupt. Philosophical terms and rhetorical flourishes, forms of expression extravagant and far-fetched, biblical expressions unintelligible to the people, unmeaning comparisons, absurd antitheses, spiritless interrogations, senseless exclamations and bombast, disfigure the sermons of the period now under consideration.

### II. Homilies in the Western church.

1. The Latins were inferior to the Greeks in their exegesis of the Scriptures. They accumulated a multitude of passages without just discrimination or due regard to their application to the people.

2. They interested themselves less with speculative and polemic theology than the Greeks.

3. They insisted upon moral duties more than the Greeks, but were equally unfortunate in their mode of treating these topics, by reason of the undue importance which they attached to the forms and ceremonies of religion; hence their reverence for saints and relics, their vigils, fasts, penances, and austerities of every kind.

4. In method and style the homilies of the Latin fathers are greatly inferior to those of the Greeks.

Causes productive of these characteristics :

1. The lack of suitable means of education.

They neither had schools of theology, like the Greeks, nor were they as familiar with the literature and oratory of their own people. Ambrose was promoted to the office of bishop with scarcely any preparation for its duties.

2. Ignorance of the original languages of the Bible.

Of the Hebrew they knew nothing; of the original of the New Testament they knew little; and still less of all that is essential to its right interpretation. When they resorted to the Scriptures, it was too frequently to oppose heresy by an indiscriminate accumulation of texts. When they attempted to explain, it was by perpetual allegories.

3. The want of suitable examples, and a just standard of public speaking.

Basil, Ephraem the Syrian, and the two Gregories, were contemporaries, and were mutual helps and incentives to one another. Others looked to them as patterns for public preaching. But such advantages were unknown in the Latin church. The earlier classic authors of Greece and Rome were discarded from bigotry; or, through ignorance, so much neglected, that their influence was little felt.

4. The unsettled state of the Western churches should be mentioned in this connection.

Persecuted and in exile at one time, at another engaged in fierce and bloody contests among themselves,\* the preachers of the day had little opportunity to prepare for their appropriate duties. Literature was neglected. Under Constantine, Rome herself ceased

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\* The contests for the election of bishops often ran so high as to end in bloodshed and murder, of which an example is given in WALCH's *History of the Popes*, p. 87.—AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS, lib. xxvii. c. iii.

to be the seat of the fine arts, and barbarism began its disastrous encroachments upon the provinces of the Western church.

5. The increasing importance of the bishop's office.

The pride of the bishops and their neglect of their duty as preachers kept pace with their advancement in authority. As in the Greek church, so also in the Latin, this sense of their own importance gave a polemic character to their preaching.

6. The increase of the ceremonies and forms of public worship.

The effect of all these was to give importance to the bishop; and in his zeal for the introduction and general adoption of them, the essential points of the Christian religion were forgotten. Need we relate with what zeal Victor, the Roman bishop, engaged in the controversies respecting Easter and the ceremonies connected with it? What complicated rites were involved with the simple ordinance of baptism, and the abuses with which they were connected; what importance, what sanctity was ascribed to their fasts, and what controversies arose between the Latin and the Greek church from the reluctance of the latter to adopt the rites of the former? What incredible effects were ascribed to the sign of the cross? Where, indeed, would the enumeration end, if we should attempt a specification of all the ceremonies, with their various abuses, which were introduced during the period under consideration? Thus ancient episcopacy touched with its withering blight the ministrations of the pulpit, both in the churches of the East and of the West.\*

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\* Many other particulars in relation to the homilies of the ancient church are given in the author's *Christian Antiquities*, c. xii. pp. 237-252.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### OF BAPTISM.

#### § 1. HISTORICAL SKETCH.

THE learned of every age have generally regarded baptism as an independent institution, distinct alike from the washings and consecrations by water, so common among the pagan nations, and from the ceremonial purifications and proselyte baptisms of the Jews. Neither have they accounted it the same as the baptism of John. Even those who have contended for the identity of the two institutions, recognise a resemblance in nothing but in the mode of administering the rite.

But the opinions of authors are greatly divided in regard to *the time when* this ordinance was instituted by our Lord. It might seem, from the account given by Matthew and Mark, to have been instituted when he gave his final commission to his disciples just before his ascension. Such was the opinion of Chrysostom, Leo the Great, Theophylact, and others. But this supposition is contradicted by John iii. 22; iv. 1, 2; from whom we learn that Christ, by his disciples, had already baptized many before his death. Augustin supposed Christ to have instituted this ordinance when he himself was baptized in Jordan; and that the three persons of the Godhead were there distinctly represented: the Father, by the voice from heaven; the Son, in the person of Christ Jesus; and the Holy Ghost by the form of the dove descending from heaven.<sup>1</sup> Others, without good reason, refer the time of instituting it to the conversation of Christ with Nicodemus; and others again, to the time when he commissioned the twelve to go forth preaching repentance and the approach of the kingdom of heaven. Matt. x. 7. But this supposition is contradicted by the fact that these same truths had been before preached, and that those who duly regarded this ministry received John's baptism. Matt. iv. 17; iii. 1, 2; Luke vii. 29.



On this subject, the truth seems to be that our Lord, on entering upon his ministry, permitted the continuance of John's baptism as harmonizing well with his own designs. The import of the rite was the same, whether administered by John himself, or by the disciples of Jesus. In either case it implied the profession of repentance and a consecration to the kingdom of heaven. To this baptism none but Jews were admitted; to whom the ministry of John was wholly restricted. Our Lord did, indeed, at a later period, declare that he had other sheep, not of that fold, which must also be gathered; but his disciples understood not the import of that declaration until after his ascension; and, even then, were slow to yield their national prejudices so far as to receive the Gentiles to participate, in common with the Jews, in the privileges of the gospel.

The introduction of *Christian baptism*, strictly so called, was immediately consequent upon our Lord's ascension; and the most important commission for receiving it, as an universal ordinance of the church, is given by its Divine author in Matt. xxviii. 19: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Those who had been baptized by John, now received Christian baptism; which was regarded by the fathers rather as a renewal of the ordinance than as a distinct rite. It differed from the former, in that it was administered in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. This was the *sacramentum plenum*, the plenary baptism of Ambrose and Cyprian.<sup>2</sup>

Baptism was uniformly administered as a *public* ordinance, even to the end of the second century. In no instance, on record in the New Testament, was it administered privately as a secret rite. Nor is there any intimation to this effect given by the earliest authorities. The apostolic fathers, indeed, give no instruction respecting the *mode* of administering this rite. Justin Martyr, who is the first to describe this ordinance, distinctly intimates that it was administered in the presence of the assembly. From the third century it became one of the secret mysteries of the church. Such it continued to be until the middle of the fifth century, when Christianity became so prevalent, and the practice of infant baptism so general, that the instances of adult baptism were comparatively rare. But during that period of time it was administered privately, in the presence of believers only; and the candidates, without re-

spect to age, or sex, were divested of all covering in order to be baptized, and in this state received the ordinance.<sup>3</sup>

It was customary for adults immediately after baptism to receive the sacrament. This usage gave rise to the custom of administering the sacrament also to children at their baptism—a superstition which continued in the Western churches until the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and in the Eastern remains unto this day.<sup>4</sup>

Certain religious sects, contrary to the established usage of the church, were accustomed to *rebaptize*; others again contended that it must be *thrice* administered, to be valid. Such was the custom of the Marcionites and Valentinians.

The Novatians maintained that those who had apostatized from the faith, on being restored to the church ought to be baptized anew; having lost, by their apostasy, the benefit of their former baptism. Against this Tertullian and Cyprian earnestly contended, alleging that the validity of the ordinance, once rightly administered, could never be annulled;<sup>5</sup> subsequent writers also concur with them in this opinion.

Baptism by heretics was early regarded as null and void. Clemens of Alexandria declared it strange and uncongenial, Ὡδὸρ ἀλλότριον. Tertullian classed heretics with idolaters, and declared their baptism of no effect; unless rightly administered, it was no baptism. *Cum baptismus rite non habeant, omnino non habent.*<sup>6</sup> Cyprian also agreed with him, and generally the churches of Africa, together with that of Cæsarea and Alexandria. These required that their converts from heretical sects should be rebaptized, limiting themselves, however, to those sects who differed most widely from the true church. The churches of Rome, and France, and of some parts of Asia, on the other hand, received such to their communion by prayer and the imposition of hands, with the exception of such as disowned the Catholic church, and of those who were not baptized in the names of the Trinity. Baptism in the name of the Trinity, even by heretics, with certain exceptions,<sup>7</sup> was considered valid. The Council of Nice proceeded on the same principle. The efficacy of the rite depended upon the Divine power accompanying it, not upon the character of him who administered it. For a further discussion of this point, see references.<sup>8</sup>

## § 2. PROSELYTE BAPTISM BY THE JEWS.

AFTER all the discussions that have been had on the subject, it is still an open question, What relations Christian baptism sustains both to the baptism of John and the proselyte baptism of the Jews? The earliest evidence for the proselyte baptism of the Jews is from their Mishna and Gemmara, both subsequent to the Christian era, but claiming for the rite a higher antiquity than the Christian chronology. Philo and Josephus make no mention of it, which by one party is urged as an argument for the prevalence of proselyte baptism, on the supposition that it was so common as to occasion no remark from them. It is also remarkable that the baptism of John excited no notice as a new institution. By another, this silence is urged as an evidence that the rite was unknown by these Jewish writers. Winer, in his *Realwörterbuch*, has given the authorities that bear on this subject. However curious the inquiry it seems not to possess any historical importance in relation to Christian baptism. It may not have been introduced until after the institution of this ordinance of the Christian church; but however that may be, it had but remote relations to Christian baptism.

## § 3. JOHN'S BAPTISM NOT CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

THE baptism of John was a peculiar ordinance, essentially distinct from Christian baptism. It is thus distinguished in the instance of converts at Ephesus. Acts xix. 3. Both had certain points of resemblance, in that each implied a profession of repentance and reformation and corresponding obligations to live a new life; but they were essentially different. The baptism of John was restricted to the Jews only. The soldiers who inquired of him respecting their duty, were apparently Jews in the service of the army. The baptism of Jesus was applicable alike to Jews and Gentiles. The baptism of John was temporary, Matt. iii. 11, 12; John i. 15-27; iii. 27; Acts xix. 2-7; that of Jesus was a perpetual ordinance. The baptism of John was a profession of repentance and faith in a Saviour that should come; that of Jesus, of repentance and faith in a Saviour that has come. The baptism of John was not in the name of Christ; that of Jesus was in his name, together with that of the Father and of the Holy Ghost. The baptism of John was by immersion. Is it credible either that that of Jesus was invaria-

bly by immersion, or that this is essential to the validity of the ordinance? Were the three thousand on the day of Pentecost so baptized, or the thousands that were shortly afterward added to the church? Were the jailer and all his, baptized by immersion on the spot and in the dead of night? Believe it who can. The eunuch, and Lydia, and the company of Cornelius, are baptized where there is water for the purpose. "Can any forbid water, that these should not be baptized?" But in no instance of Christian baptism on record in the Scriptures is the mode of administering, the quantity of water applied or to be applied, or any conveniences for immersion, indicated as requisites for the right administration of this ordinance.

It is particularly worthy of notice that no preliminary preparations are requisite for baptism in any instance recorded in the Scriptures. It is administered to a vast assembly of several thousands, to a family, or to a single individual. It is administered wherever and whenever one or more candidates present themselves, in public or in private assemblies, by night or by day, in the house or by the river, at all times and in every place. Are such facilities consistent with the formalities of baptism by immersion, or is the mode of administering the ordinance of no account in the estimation of the apostles, and varied according to circumstances?

Dr. Robinson, in his *Lexicon of the New Testament*, has stated that the earliest Latin translations approved by Augustin, and going back apparently to the second century and to usage connected with the apostolic age, uniformly adopt the Greek word *baptizo*, and never the Latin *immergo*, to denote Christian baptism; "showing that there was something in the rite of baptism to which the latter did not correspond." He urges in the same connection the scarcity of water, and the absence of baths, public or private, as strong objections to the theory of the immersion of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost, and of the five thousand on a subsequent day. He adds, that the most ancient baptismal fonts found among ruins in Palestine, as at Tekoa and Gophna, and dating back apparently to the earliest times, are not large enough to admit of the baptism of adults by immersion.

Are any other ceremonials of religion insisted on by Christ or his apostles? Who does not know that they in all else insist upon the thing signified, with singular indifference to the ceremonials of a religious rite. Why then this punctilious observance of a rite for which no precept is given. If the mode of baptism is of such

indispensable importance, how extraordinary the omission of the precept! Rather, is there not here a "providential omission," as, according to Archbishop Whately, there is in respect to creeds, and confessions, and forms of prayer, that the church might not pervert them by superstitious observances. We cannot resist the conviction that this rite of immersion leads to superstition, as seen in history; and is an unauthorized assumption, in direct conflict with the teachings, the spirit, and the example of Christ and his apostles.

A sublime simplicity, that overlooks and utterly disregards all outward ceremonials, characterizes their teachings and all their ordinances in the first planting of the Christian church. Careless of all forms, the apostles receive their converts into the church by the simple rite of baptism *in the name of Christ*; omitting, as it would seem, even the formula which Christ himself had given them. "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head," said Peter, while yet an unenlightened formalist; but Jesus mildly taught him that the significance and importance of the act depended not upon the extent of the application of the water. The church, indeed, soon lost the spirituality of her religion and the simplicity of her ordinances, in endless strife about forms and ceremonies. Perhaps the first of all her departures from the institutions of Christ and his apostles was to insist upon immersion, as emblematic of the suffusion of the Holy Spirit, and the only valid mode of administering the ordinance. Certain it is that this soon became the prevailing mode of baptizing. Other changes soon followed, as will appear in the sequel.

#### § 4. OF UNSCRIPTURAL FORMALITIES AND DOCTRINES RELATING TO BAPTISM.

1. *Exclusive immersion.*—We cannot resist the conviction that this mode of baptism was the first departure from the teaching and example of the apostles on this subject. Certainly it is not in harmony with the Christian dispensation to give such importance to merely an outward rite. It is altogether a Jewish rather than a Christian idea, and indicates an origin and a spirit foreign to that of the ordinances of Christ and the apostles. If it was a departure from their teachings, it was the earliest; for baptism by immersion unquestionably was very early the common mode of baptism.

2. *Trine immersion.*—In the second century it had become customary to immerse three times at the mention of the several per-



sons in the Godhead.\* This is only an expansion of the idea of the indispensable importance of immersion, and indicates more fully the foreign origin of this rite.

|| 3. *Baptismal regeneration*.—The Shepherd of Hermas represents the church under the similitude of a tower built of stones, and standing upon the water, which is explained to mean that salvation is by means of the water: *per aquam salva facta est et fiet*.<sup>1</sup> The stones of which it is built come up out of the water; and altogether this mystical representation seems to imply the necessity of baptismal regeneration.

But the date of this weak and spurious production can hardly be earlier than the middle of the second century, when lived Justin Martyr, who gives us the first reliable and intelligible account of a Christian baptism. The passage has been cited above, p. 271, but the conducting of the candidate to a place where there is water, and there baptizing him, instead of causing water to be brought, seems to intimate that at this time the Eastern church, or at least the church of Ephesus, had begun to baptize by immersion.

It appears from the same passage, that the church had already begun to entertain extravagant notions respecting the supposed relation of baptism to the forgiveness of sin and regeneration. "They are led by us to the water, and are regenerated after the same manner of regeneration by which we ourselves were regenerated."† Irenæus, thirty years later, is more explicit: "As dough cannot be made of dry flour, without the addition of some fluid, so we, the many, cannot be united in one body in Christ without the connecting element of water, which comes down from heaven; and as the earth is quickened and rendered fruitful by dew and rain, so Christianity by the heavenly water."<sup>2</sup> Thus early were the minds of men possessed of the delusion of baptismal regeneration, which with singular tenacity and uniformity the church has retained through every age.

This, indeed, became the common delusion of the subsequent ages of the church. Chrysostom, on the regenerating power of the baptismal water, uses this extraordinary language: "They who approach the baptismal font are not only made clean from all wickedness, but holy also and just, *ἀγίους καὶ δικαίους*. Although

\* Ter mergitaur, amplius aliquid respondentes, etc.—TERTULL. *De Cor. Mil.* o. iii.

† Ἀγονται ὑφ' ἡμῶν ἐνθα ὕδωρ ἐστὶ καὶ τρόπον ἀναγεννήσεως ὃν καὶ ἡμεῖς αὐτοὶ ἀναγεννήθημεν ἀναγεννῶνται.

a man should be foul with every human vice, the blackest that can be named, yet should he fall into the baptismal pool, he ascends from the divine waters purer than the beams of noon."

Even Luther, and many of the English reformers, alas! did not advance far enough in their reformation to reject this delusion, but by the authority of their great names perpetuated it in the Protestant churches of Germany and of England.

4. *The anointing with oil* was a ceremony very early superadded to the ordinance of baptism. Irenæus comments with great severity upon this rite, as a ridiculous superstition of certain heretics.<sup>3</sup> But Tertullian, twenty years later, declares it to be an established usage of the church in Africa, to anoint with oil immediately after baptism, in imitation of the anointing of the Jewish priesthood.\* The anointing was applied to the forehead, ears, nose, and breast; then another council with equal solemnity specifies the forehead, the nostrils, the eyes, the ears, the mouth. In the fourth century an anointing *before baptism* was added to these ceremonials. And at a period a little later still, this baptismal oil must first be consecrated by the bishop for the remission of sins and the preparation for baptism.<sup>4</sup> One anointing does not suffice, just as immersion merely is not sufficient; but, in the age of Tertullian, this is three times repeated, with reference to the several persons of the Trinity.†

5. *Then follows an exorcism of the baptized*, of which the Council of Carthage, A. D. 256, makes mention; and Cyprian, of the same age, distinctly intimates the importance of this formality.<sup>5</sup>

6. *The consecration of the baptismal water* is another of these superstitious ceremonials of baptism,‡ as early as the ages of Tertullian and Cyprian. The Apostolical Constitutions prescribe the prayer to be used in this consecration of the water.<sup>6</sup>

7. *The imposition of hands*, as early as the age of Tertullian, becomes an indispensable ceremonial of the ordinance under consideration. By this rite the apostles imparted miraculous gifts. This was called "the receiving of the Holy Ghost." Acts viii. 17;

\* Exinde egressi de laværo perungimur benedicta unctione de pristina disciplina, qua ungi oleo de cornu in sacerdotium solebant.—*De Bapt.* c. vii.

† Nec semel, sed ter ad singula nomina in personas singulas tingimur.—*Adv. Prax.* c. xxvi.; *De Coron. Milit.* c. iii.

‡ Oportet mundari et sanctificari aquam prius a sacerdote, ut possit baptismo suo peccata hominis qui baptizatur abluere. Comp. Tertull. *Epist.* 70; *De Bapt.* c. vi.

ix. 44-48; xix. 6. After the cessation of this miraculous communication, the bishops, assuming to be both the successors of the apostles and high-priests, claimed still the power of communicating, not the miraculous power, but the renewing, sanctifying influence of the Spirit of God by the laying on of their hands. None but a bishop had power to impart this mysterious grace; accordingly, when others baptized, it became necessary for the bishop to make the circuit of his diocese, to lay his hands on these neophytes, that they through him might receive the Holy Ghost. This is the origin of *confirmation*, which remains to this day an *opus operatum* of the Episcopal church, eliminated, we may charitably believe, of the impious assumption originally implied in it. A few passages are brought together in the margin, illustrative of the doctrinal teaching of the ancient church on the subject. Cornelius of Rome, contemporary with Cyprian, speaking of one who had not received this act of the bishop, inquires, "But not receiving this, how could he receive the Holy Ghost?" This was the basis of the frequent discussions and councils in the African church respecting the re-baptizing of heretics, some reasoning that their baptism was valid; it was only necessary to impart unto them the Holy Ghost by laying on of the bishop's hands. Others, like Cyprian, argued that this was not enough, for the act would be marred by the lack of baptism in the true church.\*

8. *Insufflation*.—Jesus breathed upon his disciples and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," John xx. 22; in like manner, this becomes one of the formalities of the exorcism connected with baptism. Cyril of Jerusalem, A. D. 350, one hundred years after Cyprian,

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\* Eos qui sunt foris extra ecclesiam tincti, et apud hæreticos et schismaticos profanæ equæ labe maculati, quando ad nos atque ad ecclesiam, quæ una est, venerint, baptizari oportere; eo quod parum sit eis manum imponere ad accipiendum Spiritum Sanctum, nisi accipiant et ecclesiæ baptismum. Tunc enim deum plene sanctificari et esse filii Dei possunt, si sacramento utroque nascantur.—*Conc. Carthag. Patrologiæ. iii. p. 1046.*

Male ergo sibi quidam interpretantur ut dicant quod per manus impositionem Spiritum Sanctum accipiant et sic recipiantur, cum manifestum sit utroque sacramento debere eos renasci in ecclesia catholica. Tunc quippe poterunt filii Dei esse.—*Conc. Carthag. Patrologiæ. iii. p. 1057.*

Quod nunc quoque apud nos geritur, ut, qui in ecclesia baptizantur, præpositis ecclesiæ offerantur et per nostram orationem ac manus impositionem Spiritum S. consequantur et signaculo dominico consummentur.—CYPRIAN, *Epist. 73.*

Per manus impositionem episcopi datur unicuique credenti Spiritus S. sicut apostoli circa Samaritanos post Philippi baptismam manum eis imponendo fecerunt et hac ratione Spiritum S. in eos contulerunt.—*De Bap.*

specifies this rite as connected with salvation.\* Gennadius, toward the close of the next century, testified that this had become an universal custom throughout the whole world, both in regard to infants and adult persons, before they were admitted to the sacrament of regeneration and the fountain of life.†

9. *Opening the ears.*—As our Saviour, in one of the cities of Decapolis, put his finger in the ears of the deaf, and said *Ephphatha*, Mark vii. 34, so this also was transferred to the ceremonials of baptism in the fourth century.‡ This ceremony seems not, however, to have been generally observed in the ancient church.

10. *Anointing the eyes with clay*, in imitation of Jesus healing the blind man, John ix. 6. Ambrose distinctly specifies this ceremony and alludes to it. It must have been one of the rituals of this ordinance in the fourth and fifth centuries, but to what extent it prevailed does not appear.§

11. *Honey mingled with milk*, and sometimes with wine, was given to the newly baptized, for which fanciful reasons were sought out. Baptism was a new birth, and he who received it was a spiritual child, and must be fed with milk, and not with strong meat. Whatever may have been the analogies which first suggested this ceremonial, it found a place in the ritual as early as the age of Tertullian, and became a customary rite.⁷

12. *The application of salt* is also mentioned by Augustin,|| at the end of the fourth century, and by the third Council of Carthage, A. D. 397, c. 5. Then this salt was first exorcised and consecrated by breathing upon it and offering a prayer. Thus prepared, the priest put it in the child's mouth, saying, "Receive the salt of wisdom to eternal life."

13. *The covering and uncovering of the head* was another of the preparatory ceremonials in baptism, for which also mysterious significance was sought. The eyes were veiled, to indicate the exclu-

\* Κἄν ἐμπνοήσῃς (insufflari) στήθεά σοι τὸ πρᾶγμα.—*Procatech.* § 9.

† Cum sive parvuli sive juvenes ad regenerationis veniunt sacramentum, non prius fontem vitæ adeant quam exorcismis et exsufflationibus clericorum spiritus ab eis immundus abigatur.—*De Dogmat. Eccles.* c. xxxi.

‡ Aperite aures et bonum odorem vitæ æternæ inhalatum vobis munere sacramentorum carpite, quod vobis significavimus cum apertionis celebrantes mysterium diceremus Ephata.—AMBROSIAS. *De Myster.* c. i.

§ Quando dedisti tuum nomen, tulit lutum et linivit super oculos tuos.—AMBROS *De Sacram.* lib. iii. c. ii.

|| Signabar jam signo crucis ejus et condiebar ejus sale.—AUGUST. *Confess* ii. 11:

sion of wandering thoughts; and the vail taken off, to indicate the freedom of the new birth.\*

14. *The sign of the cross* was a ceremonial both on receiving one as a catechumen and again at baptism. This was an indispensable rite, to which a mysterious and magical power was ascribed, and without which the baptism was not valid. It was the "seal," *the sealing act* of the ordinance. "The water is instead of the burial; the oil, instead of the Holy Ghost; the seal, instead of the cross."† It was applied to the forehead and to the breast; in the consecration of the oil, and of the water; in the application of the oil, and even of the salt; and indeed upon almost all conceivable occasions. No superstition of the church, perhaps, was earlier—none has been more universal in its observance—than this sign of the cross. Justin Martyr so speaks of it as to intimate that it had already become familiar to the Christians of that age.<sup>8</sup> At the end of the second century it is charged upon them as an act of idolatrous worship,<sup>9</sup> and with some show of reason, as would seem from Tertullian's account of it, who affirms that they crossed themselves on the forehead in every act—on going out, on coming in, on putting on a coat or a shoe, on lighting a lamp, in prayer, at the table, when they sat down, when they retired to rest, in short, whatever they did.<sup>10</sup>

From private use it soon became a public religious rite, with mystical, talismanic power. The catechumen was received, baptized, and confirmed with the sign of the cross. It was often repeated in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, as also in public prayer and private worship, and renewed on all occasions and in every place.

Sometimes, the ancient fathers profess by this sign to commemorate the sufferings of Christ upon the cross; at others, to intimate that salvation cometh only by the cross of Christ; and again, as a profession of their willingness to take up their cross and follow Christ; and more frequently, some mysterious grace, like that of the covenants and other outward ordinances, was vainly sought by the endless repetition of the sign of the cross.

15. We have yet to enumerate among the concluding ceremonies of baptism the *kiss of peace*, by which the candidates were recognised as brethren of the household of faith.

\* Habet enim libertatem ista spiritalis nativitas; proprie autem carnis nativitas servitutem.—AUGUST. *Serm.* 376.

† Qui renati et signo Christi signati sunt. CYPRIAN *ad Demet.* c. 22.—Semper cruci baptismus jungitur.—AUGUSTIN. *De Tem. Comp. Apost. Const.* iii. c. 17.



16. To this was added, in many churches, *the washing of their feet* by the bishop, in imitation of Christ in washing his disciples' feet, which is retained as a ceremony of the Greek church.

17. Once more, in token of the purity of life to which they were regenerated in baptism, they *were arrayed in white robes*, an emblem of innocence, which they continued to wear for eight days. For similar emblematic purposes, they laid their garments by, and were baptized in a state of entire nudity.

18. Having laid aside thus their garments spotted with the flesh, and arrayed themselves in white robes, they were provided *with lighted torches*, as a figure of those lamps of faith wherewith bright and virgin souls shall go forth to meet the Bridegroom.

We have now concluded the wearisome detail of the ceremonials with which the simple and significant ordinance of baptism, when the church began to lose sight of that which is signified in this ordinance, was soon encumbered in a vain effort to obtain that inward grace by a punctilious and superstitious observance of outward ceremonies. Such to the church has been the disastrous consequence, as all its history shows, of substituting the forms of religion for its spirit! "If ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances after the commandments of men?" "Are ye so foolish; having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?"

In view of all these vain superstitions, we may fitly contrast the spirituality of the primitive church with its formality in a subsequent age, in Chrysostom's beautiful comparison: "In those days the church was heaven itself; for the Holy Spirit ruled every council, quickened and hallowed every member of the church. We only now retain the traces of these gifts of grace. The church is like a woman fallen from her ancient prosperity, who possesses various signs of her former wealth, and who displayeth the little chests and caskets in which her treasure was preserved, but hath lost the treasure itself. To such a woman may the church now be likened."

#### § 5. OF THE NAMES BY WHICH THE ORDINANCE IS DESIGNATED.

THE term Baptism is derived from the Greek βάπτω, from which is formed βαπτίζω, with its derivations βαπτισμός and βάπτισμα, *baptism*. The primary signification of the original is to dip, plunge, immerse; the obvious import of the noun is *immersion*, but, in a restricted sense, it often denotes a partial application of water.

Much learned labour has been expended on its meaning, and both parties in the controversy have claimed for themselves the argument based on the signification of the words *baptism* and *baptize*.\*

The term *λουτρόν*, *washing*, is used figuratively, to denote that purification or sanctification which is implied in the profession of those who are received by baptism into the church of Christ. It is equivalent to the washing of regeneration, and the receiving of the Holy Ghost. Tit. iii. 5. This phraseology was familiar to the ancient fathers.<sup>1</sup>

Baptism is also denominated by them the *water*,—and a *fountain*, from whence, according to Bingham, is derived the English, *font*,—*an anointing*, *a seal*, or *sign*, etc. It is also styled *an illuminating* or *enlightening ordinance*, *the light of the mind*, *of the eye*, etc., sometimes with reference to that inward illumination and sanctification which was supposed to attend that ordinance, and sometimes with reference to the instructions by which the candidates for this ordinance were enlightened in a knowledge of the Christian religion.

With reference to the secrecy in which, in the early ages of the church, it was administered as a sacred mystery, it was styled *μυστήριον*, *a mystery*. A multitude of other names occur in the writings of the fathers, such as *grace*, *pardon*, *death of sin*, *philactery*, *regeneration*, *adoption*, *access to God*, *way of life*, *eternal life*, etc. These terms are more or less defined and explained in the authorities to whom reference is had in the index.<sup>2</sup> Let it be observed, that these appellations were unknown to the apostolical churches. They were the invention of writers and ritualists of a subsequent age.

#### § 6. OF INFANT BAPTISM.

THE first baptisms, on the organization of the churches, were of necessity those of adults converted to Christianity, and for several centuries until the prevalence of the Christian religion over paganism. The baptism of such must have been chiefly the subject of historical record. The silence of the early historical records respecting infant baptism is no valid argument against it. But the general introduction of the rite of infant baptism, by reason of the prevalence of Christianity, so far changed the regulations of the

\* For a discussion of this point, full and satisfactory, the reader is referred to an article by Prof. Stuart, in Bib. Repos. April, 1833, and to a work on Baptism, by Edward Beecher, D. D.

church concerning the qualifications of candidates, and their admission, that what was formerly the rule in this respect, has become the exception. The institutions of the church during the first five centuries, concerning the requisite preparations for baptism, and all the laws and rules that existed during that period, relating to the acceptance or rejection of candidates, necessarily fell into disuse when the baptism of infants began not only to be permitted, but enjoined as a duty, and almost universally observed. The old rule, which prescribed caution in the admission of candidates, and a careful preparation for the rite, was, after the sixth century, applicable, for the most part, only to Jewish, heathen, and other proselytes. The discipline which was formerly requisite, preparatory to baptism, *now followed* this rite, as a needful qualification for communion.

Christian baptism has from the beginning been characterized for the universality of its application. Proselyte baptism was administered only to pagan nations. John's baptism was restricted solely to the Jews; but Christian baptism is open alike to all. Proselyte baptism included the children with the parents; John's baptism excluded both children and the female sex. Christian baptism excludes no nation, or sex, or age. Comp. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Gal. iii. 28; 1 Cor. xii. 13; together with the authorities of Irenæus, Cyprian, and Tertullian, quoted below. From all which, it appears evident beyond a doubt, that the ancient church understood that Christian baptism was designed for all, πάντες, πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, in the fullest sense of the term—that no nation, or class, or sex, or age was excluded. Of course it was understood to be universal in the highest degree.

In common with all who maintain the doctrine of infant baptism, the learned in Germany generally admit the authenticity of the historical testimony in favour of it. They admit that infant baptism was an usage of the primitive church as early as the time of Cyprian, Tertullian, or even of Irenæus; but many of them refuse to follow us in the conclusion that this ordinance must have been instituted by the authority, and supported by the example of the apostles. They either deny that the baptism of infant children was authorized by Christ and his apostles, or they content themselves with stating the historical facts in relation to the subject—giving the earliest evidence of the rite in question, without advancing any theory whatever respecting the origin of this ordinance.

According to Rheinwald, "traces of infant baptism appear in

the Western church after the middle of the second century, *i. e.* within about fifty years of the apostolic age; and, toward the end of this century, it becomes the subject of controversy in Proconsular Africa. Though its necessity was asserted in Africa and Egypt, in the beginning of the third, it was, even to the end of the fourth century, by no means universally observed—least of all in the Eastern church; and finally became a general ecclesiastical institution in the age of Augustin.”

Such are the views of some of the most distinguished German scholars of the present day, while others affirm that infant baptism was from the beginning an ordinance of the Christian church. But enough. Authority is not argument, nor is an ostentatious parade of names of any avail either to establish truth or refute error. These authors themselves generally admit the validity of the testimony of the early fathers; nor does it appear that, with all their research, directed even by German diligence and scholarship, they have essentially varied the historical argument drawn from original sources in favour of infant baptism. Those authorities have long been familiar to the public, and they are very briefly brought together in this place as a concise exhibition of the historical evidence in favour of the theory that this ordinance was instituted by Divine authority, and as such was observed by the learned in Germany on this subject.

The historical argument for infant baptism will be best presented by beginning with the age of Chrysostom, Gregory Nazianzen, and Augustin, in the last half of the fourth century, when infant baptism had confessedly become a common ordinance both of the Western and of the Eastern church, and advance from this point as far as our historical data will carry us toward the age of the apostles.

To begin with Chrysostom: “Some think that the heavenly grace (of baptism) consists only in forgiveness of sins; but I have reckoned ten advantages of it. *For this cause we baptize infants, though they are not defiled with sin,*” or, as Augustin has quoted it, “though they have not any *transgressions* or *actual sins*.” “There was pain and trouble in the practice of that Jewish circumcision; but our circumcision, I mean the grace of baptism, gives cure without pain, and this for infants as well as men.”<sup>1</sup>

Gregory Nazianzen: “Baptism is suited to every age. Hast thou a child? wait not until he becomes a sinner, but in his tenderest age sanctify him by the Spirit. But you hesitate because of

his tender age. How cold-hearted, how weak in faith, O mother! Hannah, before the birth of Samuel, consecrated him to God, and, when born, devoted him to the priesthood—so should children also in their tenderest age be baptized, though having yet no idea of perdition or of grace.”

Augustin, remarking on the passage 1 Cor. vii. 14: “There were then *Christian* infants, *parvuli Christiani*, who were sanctified,” that is, baptized, “by the authority of one or both of their parents.” He treats of baptism as a saving ordinance, which doctrine “the whole body of the church holds, as delivered to them in the case of little infants who are baptized, who certainly cannot believe with the heart unto righteousness, and yet no Christian will say that they are baptized in vain.” Indeed, the writings of Augustin show, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that infant baptism was an established usage of the church in his age, that it was “*an apostolical tradition*,”<sup>2</sup> *apostolica traditio*—that it came not by a general council, or by any authority later or less than that of the apostles. The original authorities have been collected by Wall, but are too numerous and extensive to be transferred to these pages.

The authority of these eminent fathers of the fourth century, representing the two great divisions of the church, is sufficient to indicate the prevailing sentiments of the church in this age respecting the baptism of infants. They sufficiently indicate that the validity and propriety of infant baptism was at this time universally acknowledged and generally practised, especially in the Western church. A fuller induction of authorities may be found in Wall’s History, from which the above have been chiefly collected. We may, therefore, safely assume the general custom of baptizing the infant offspring of believers as an established fact in this age of the church, and begin from this period to traverse backward toward the age of the apostles, and collect the authorities as they arise, in the order of their succession, respecting the usage of the church and her authority for this ordinance.

From these fathers we advance, omitting intermediate authorities of less importance, to Cyprian, in the middle of the third century. In the age of Cyprian there arose in Africa a question whether a child might be baptized *before the eighth day or not*. Fidus, a country bishop, referred the inquiry to a council of sixty-six bishops, convened under Cyprian, A. D. 253, for their opinion. To this inquiry they reply at length, delivering it as their unanimous opinion that baptism may, with propriety, be administered at



any time *previous to the eighth day*. No question was raised on the point whether children ought to be baptized *at all* or not. "This, therefore, was our opinion in the council, that we ought not to hinder any one from baptism and the grace of God. And this rule, as it holds for all, is, we think, more especially to be observed in reference to infants, even to those newly born."\*

The authority of Origen brings us fifty years nearer to the age of the apostles. He was born A. D. 185, within one hundred years of the apostolic age. His father was a martyr to the Christian faith; his grandfather was a Christian; and his great-grandfather, also a believer in Christ, must have been contemporary with some of the apostles themselves. Could this Christian family have been ignorant of the teachings of the apostles and the usage of the apostolic churches? Could they have failed to transmit from father to son, for only three generations, the traditions of the apostles? Now, Origen's words are these: "The church received from the apostles *injunction* or *tradition*, παράδοσιν, to give baptism even to infants, according to that saying of our Lord, Thou wast an

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\* Quantum vero ad causam infantium pertinet, quos dixisti intra secundum vel tertium diem, quo nati sint, constitutos baptizari non oportere et considerandam esse legem circumcisionis antiquæ, ut intra octavum diem eum, qui natus est, baptizandum et sanctificandum non putares; longe aliud in concilio nostro omnibus visum est. Universi judicavimus, nulli homini nato misericordiam Dei et gratiam denegandam. Nam cum Dominus in evangelio suo dicat: filius hominis non venit animas hominum perdere, sed salvare, quantum in nobis est, si fieri potest, nulla anima perdenda est.—Nam Deus ut personam non accipit, sic nec ætatem, cum se omnibus ad cœlestis gratiæ consecutionem æqualitate librata præbeat patrem. Nam et quod vestigium infantis in primis partus sui diebus constituti, mundum non esse dixisti, quod unusquisque nostrum adhuc horreat exosculari, nec hoc putamus ad cœlestem gratiam dandam impedimento esse oportere. Scriptum est enim: omnia munda sunt mundis. Nec aliquis nostrum id debet horrere, quod Deus dignatus est facere. Nam etsi adhuc infans a partu novus est, non ita est tamen, ut quisquam illum in gratia danda atque in pace facienda horrere debeat osculari; quando in osculo infantis unusquisque nostrum pro sua religione ipsas adhuc recentes Dei manus debeat cogitare, quas in homine modo formato et recens nato quodammodo exosculamur, quando id, quod Deus fecit, amplectimur.—Ceterum si homines impedire aliquid ad consecutionem gratiæ posset, magis adultos et proventus, et majores natu possent impedire peccata graviora. Porro autem si etiam gravissimis delictoribus et in Deum multum ante peccantibus, cum postea crediderint, remissa peccatorum datur, et a baptismo atque a gratia nemo prohibetur, quanto magis prohiberi non debet infans, qui recens natus nihil peccavit, nisi quod secundum Adam carnaliter natus contagium mortis antiquæ prima nativitate contraxit, quia ad remissam peccatorum accipiendam hoc ipso facilis accedit, quod illi remittuntur, non propria, sed aliena peccata.—CYPRIAN. 59, *Ep. ad Fidum*.

infant when thou was baptized—their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven.”

Whatever may be said of Origen’s reasoning on the subject, he must be allowed to be a credible witness as to the facts respecting the practice of the churches and their authority for it.

Other passages to the same effect from Origen are given by Wall:—

“According to the *usage of the church*, baptism is given even to infants; when if there were nothing in infants which needed forgiveness and mercy, the grace of baptism would seem to be superfluous. This testimony needs no comment in regard to the fact that infants were baptized.”<sup>3</sup>

“Infants are baptized for the forgiveness of sins. Of what sins? Or when have they sinned? Or can there be any reason for the laver in their case, unless it be according to the sense we have mentioned above, viz. no one is free from pollution, though he has lived but one day upon earth. And because, by baptism native pollution is taken away, and therefore infants are baptized.”<sup>4</sup>

“‘For this cause it was that the church received an order from the apostles to give baptism even to infants.’ These testimonies not only imply that infant baptism was generally known and practised, but also mention it as *an order received from the apostles*. And although some may doubt the correctness of Origen’s reasoning as to the ground of the practice, no one can doubt that he is a competent witness of the fact that such was the practice, and that it was understood to be derived from the apostles.”<sup>5</sup>

These translations from Origen were made within near a hundred years after his age by several men of different parties. They so frequently speak of infant baptism as to forbid the supposition that they may have been interpolations or forgeries. They must be received as reliable authorities from Origen himself. As such, they are of great importance in the argument. Origen was the lineal descendant, of the third generation, from Christian ancestors, who were contemporary with the apostles themselves. Allow for his father, who suffered martyrdom, twenty-five years, for his grandfather and great-grandfather forty each, and we are brought to the year 80, only twelve years after the death of Mark the Evangelist, at Alexandria, where the family of Origen resided. John survived Mark twenty-one years. Timothy and Titus must have been living with the Origen family for many years, and possibly other of the original twelve besides John. The “faithful men” to

whom they committed the ordinances of religion, that they might be able to teach others, must have been contemporary with this family for near a hundred years. Now, consider the insatiable curiosity of Origen to acquire knowledge, and his facilities, and is it credible, is it possible, that he should have been ignorant of the custom, the teaching, and the tradition of the apostles respecting the subjects of baptism? This was a rite of almost daily occurrence, common to the church in every place. Origen travelled extensively to obtain information; he visited the apostolic churches, and resided among the chief of them. Could then a rite, totally new, unfounded, and contrary to apostolic injunction and example, have been so established, and so long prevail as to be received as an ordinance of the apostles? Where was John the Apostle, and Timothy, and Titus, and the "faithful men, able to teach others also?" Where were Polycarp and Irenæus, to say nothing of Barnabas and Hermas, that they did not rebuke and expose the delusion of those who would thus forsake the commandment of the apostles for the ordinances of man?

We come next to Tertullian. He objects strongly to the *hasty administration* of baptism to children, and inveighs against the superstition of the age in this respect, in such a manner as to show, beyond dispute, the prevalence of the custom in his days. "According to the condition, disposition, and age of each, the delay of baptism is peculiarly advantageous, especially in the case of little children, *parvulos*. Why should the godfathers [of these baptized children] be brought into danger? For they may fail by death to fulfil their promises, or through the perverseness of the child. Our Lord, indeed, says, 'Forbid them not to come unto me.' Let them come, then, when of adult age. Let them come when they can learn; when they are taught *why* they come. Let them become Christians when they shall have learned Christ. Why hasten that innocent age to the forgiveness of sins [by baptism?]  
In worldly things men observe greater caution, so that he is intrusted with divine things, to whom those of earth are not confided." \*

"The argument of Tertullian is plainly this: 'The baptism, especially of infant children, *parvulos*, ought to be delayed until they

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\* Pro cujusque personæ conditione ac dispositione, etiam ætate, cunctatio baptismi utilior est; præcipue tamen circa parvulos. Quid enim necesse est, sponsos etiam periculo ingeri? Quia et ipsi, per mortalitatem destituere promissiones suas possunt, et proventu malæ indolis, falli. Ait quidem Dominus, "Nolite illos prohibere ad me venire." Veniant ergo, dum adolescent. Veniant.

have attained to some degree of intelligence.' Why? because a bad disposition may spring up, and the sponsors (those who offered them up in baptism, and became responsible for their religious education and their good behaviour) be thus disappointed and fail of performing their engagements. The whole argument clearly shows, from its very nature, that infants must be intended, *parvulos*. If not, why did they need sponsors? They could engage for themselves. Moreover, if adults were intended, then their disposition would have already sprung up, and developed itself; and what danger would there have been of the disappointment which Tertullian fears?

"The whole passage, by the most certain implication, shows that the 'little ones' (*parvulos*) were such as had not developed their disposition, and such as did not and could not stand sponsors for themselves. Now Tertullian cautioned the sponsors not to take such engagements upon themselves, as all their efforts to fulfil them might be frustrated.

"This passage clearly shows that *Infant Baptism* was commonly practised at the time when Tertullian lived, that is, a hundred years after the apostles.

"This appears from the reasoning. He notices a text which was doubtless appealed to by those who were accustomed to baptize their children. Our Lord says, indeed, *forbid them* (*parvulos*) *not to come unto me*. The force of this he feels it necessary to parry: 'Let them come, then,' he says, 'when they are grown up: let them come when they learn: [let them come] when they are taught whither they are coming.' All this shows beyond any reasonable doubt, that Tertullian was attacking the *custom* of bringing children to be baptized *before* they were grown up, or had been taught whether they were to come in baptism; that is, that he was attacking the *custom* of having them baptized in an infantile state. This must be admitted, or there is no sense in the passage. And what follows makes it, if possible, still more clear that he was opposing such a custom.

"'Let them become Christians,' he says, 'when they are able to know Christ.' Their being devoted to Christ in baptism he represents as their *becoming Christians*; and he objects to their becom-

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dum discount; dum, quo veniant, doceantur. Fiant Christiani quum Christum nosse potuerint. Quid festinat innocens ætas ad remissionem peccatorum? Cautius agitur in secularibus; ut cui substantia terrena non creditur, divina credatur.—*De Baptismo*, c. xviii. Comp. Works of L. Woods, D.D., lec. 116, vol. iii., whence these extracts are taken.



ing Christians at any age, when they were incapable of knowing Christ. Again he says, 'Why should those who are of an age that is innocent be eager for remission of sins?' That is, Why should those who are so young as to be incapable of sinning, be eager to obtain forgiveness?—as he thought was done by baptism. He goes on with his objection against the practice of infant baptism. 'Men act with more caution,' he says, 'in temporal matters. Worldly substance is not committed to those to whom divine things are intrusted.' That is, little children, as all agree, are not to be intrusted with worldly substance; and yet you intrust them with divine things, which are so much more important.

"Still, not content with all this, he repeats an idea which he had before suggested. 'Let them know how to seek for salvation, that you may appear to give to them who ask.' That is, you have been accustomed to give baptism to those who could not ask for it. Discontinue this practice, and give baptism to those only who are capable of requesting it for themselves.

"He finally urges delay in administering baptism to unmarried persons, on account of their being peculiarly exposed to temptation. He does not forbid baptism in their case, but urges the postponement of it until they are either married or established in habits of continence. He says, 'If any understand the weight of baptismal obligations, they will be more fearful about taking them than about putting them off.'

"From this famous, singular, and controverted passage in Tertullian, it is then perfectly clear, that there was in his day a practice of baptizing infants, those who had and could have no knowledge of Christ; that he was himself strongly opposed to the practice; and that he was opposed because he thought that while baptism secured the forgiveness of all the sins *previously* committed, the sins committed *after* baptism exposed the soul to the utmost peril. It was on this account that he would have baptism delayed in respect to all those who would be particularly liable to temptation and to sin, which he considered to be the case with those who were unmarried, and those who were in infancy. This was at the bottom of his zeal for delaying baptism in regard to infants and others. And it all implies that the practice against which he argued was common. Otherwise, why did he so earnestly oppose it?"

But why did not Tertullian, in his zeal against infant baptism, employ another and most conclusive argument? Why not say this practice is a dangerous innovation, a fiction of the day? It was



unknown fifty years ago; unknown to the apostolic churches, unknown to the apostles themselves. From the beginning it was not so. Ye know the teaching of the apostles. Ye know the traditions of the churches; ye know it was not so. Such an argument against the object of his aversion would have been conclusive, and must have suggested itself to this adroit tactician. Why did he not use it? Plainly, because he could not. He could only reason from his own principles, and pass in silence the mightier argument of the authority and usage of the apostolic churches, because this was directly opposed to him.

“His condemning the practice, not only proves its previous existence; it proves more. It proves that this was no innovation. When a man condemns a practice, he is naturally desirous to support his peculiar views by the strongest arguments. Could Tertullian, therefore, have shown that the practice was of recent origin, that it had been introduced in his own day, or even at any time subsequent to the lives of the apostles, we have every reason to believe that he would have availed himself of a ground so obvious, so conclusive. It proves still further, that the baptism of infants was the *general practice* of the church in Tertullian’s time. His opinion is his own. It is that of a dissentient from the universal body of professing Christians. He never pretends to say that any part of the church held or acted upon it.”

Origen and Tertullian belonged to the African churches, though the former really represents the Eastern church; and the latter, the Western. We have also the authority of another, a native of the East, but a minister of one of the Western churches—Irenæus, a disciple of Polycarp of Asia Minor, and the disciple of John. At an advanced age, he says of Polycarp, “I remember his discourse to the people concerning the conversations he had with John the Apostle, and others who had seen our Lord; how he rehearsed their discourses, and what he heard them who were eye-witnesses of the Word of Life say of our Lord, and of his miracles and doctrine.” This proves that Polycarp had diligently inquired from those who could tell him, concerning our Lord and his doctrine. He had made himself master of whatever was to be known. It proves also that such *traditions were repeated by him in his public discourses to the people*; the best of all possible modes of instruction. Moreover, these discourses made the deepest impression on the memory of Irenæus, who expressly mentions “reborn infants.”

Irenæus was still living in the childhood of Origen and Tertul-

lian, and able to testify of the traditions of the apostles and the uses of the churches. This testimony he has given obscurely in one vexed passage, which has been a thousand times claimed and rejected by men of equal learning and research. It runs as follows:—He represents Christ as sanctifying every several age by the likeness it has to himself, for he came to save all; “all who by him are reborn of God, infants and little ones, and children and youths, and persons of mature age; therefore he passed through these several ages. For infants he was made an infant, sanctifying infants; for little ones, he became a little one, sanctifying thereby those of that age, and also being to them an example of goodness, holiness, and dutifulness.” Observe the variation in his language. He does not say that Jesus was an *example* to *infants*, they being incapable of being benefited by example, which clearly indicates that they were truly infants, and not men just converted.

The relevancy of this passage turns wholly on the meaning, as understood by Irenæus, of the phrase *regenerated to God*. If in this expression the author has reference to baptism and intends to say, that Christ came to save all who through him should be regenerated to God *by baptism*; then plainly infant children are the subjects of baptism, and are in this way, and by means of this ordinance, recovered and saved by Christ. But it has been shown by writers on this subject, that this form of expression, *renascuntur in Deum, regenerated unto God*, was familiar to Irenæus, and to the fathers generally, *as denoting baptism*. Irenæus himself, in referring to our Lord’s commission to his disciples, says, “When he gave his disciples this commission of *regenerating unto God*, he said unto them, ‘Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,’” lib. iii. c. xix. Here the commission of *regenerating unto God* is supposed to relate to the act of *baptizing*. Baptism, according to the *usus loquendi* of the age, was regeneration. This, Neander himself admits, in commenting on the above passage from Irenæus, which he receives as valid and incontrovertible proof of the practice of infant baptism at this early age. How else can an unconscious infant be regenerated, save by baptism, according to the views then prevalent respecting this ordinance?

The authority of Justin Martyr is relied on by many. In his second apology, written about A. D. 160, he says, “There are many persons of both sexes, some sixty, some seventy, and some eighty years old, who were made disciples to Christ in their childhood,

αἱ ἐκ παίδων ἐμαρτυεῖσθαι τῷ Χριστῷ.<sup>6</sup> Some, or all of these, were baptized in the age of the apostles, and several considerations are urged from this author himself, to show that the phrase ἐκ παίδων relates strictly to children in their infancy. It would, indeed, be the appropriate and natural expression, if such were his meaning; but it is also applicable to children and youth of a greater age.

In his dialogue with Tryphon the Jew, Justin contrasts and compares baptism with circumcision. We draw near to God by him, for we have not received circumcision by the flesh, but that which is spiritual, as Enoch and others observed. This we, though sinners, receive through the compassion of God by baptism, which all are permitted to receive. Other authorities are sometimes drawn from the Shepherd of Hermas<sup>7</sup> and Clemens Romanus;<sup>8</sup> but these are too equivocal to be relied on in an argument of this kind. *Tenebris nigrescunt omnia circum.*

The foregoing are the most important historical authorities in favour of infant baptism as an usage of the primitive church. They have long been before the public. They have been a thousand times summoned and marshalled for the onset, and a thousand times contested, and still the conflict continues as undecided as ever. There they are, however, on the records of history, unchallenged, unimpeached, and there they will be for ever—the unhappy subject of controversy and division to kindred in Christ who, else, had been one in sentiment and in name, as they still are in all other essential points of faith and practice.

The authorities which have been cited carry back the ordinance of infant baptism to a period of less than one hundred years from the age of the apostles. When was it introduced, if not by the apostles? And by whose *authority*, if not by *theirs*? To these important inquiries all history is silent, assigning no time for its first introduction, nor revealing the least excitement, controversy, or opposition to an innovation so remarkable as this must have been if it was obtruded upon the churches without the authority of the apostles. How, especially, could this have been effected in that age which adhered so strictly, even in the smallest things, to ancient usage and authority, and which was so near to the apostles that their usages and instructions must have been distinctly known by tradition? Or how could the change have been effected in so short a space of time? Hath a nation changed their gods in a day? Have they in a day changed any cherished institution? Far from

it. Their traditionary usages are a fair record of their former institutions. We have received by *tradition* and *usage*, aside from all historical records, the sentiments and practice of our pilgrim forefathers in relation to baptism; while the dissent of Roger Williams is recorded in the institutions of another church, in lineaments more lasting than the perishable records of the historian; and yet Tertullian, Origen, and Irenæus were removed from the apostolic age but about half the distance at which we stand from that of our forefathers.

There is yet one argument that is strictly historical, and may, with propriety, be mentioned in this place. It is drawn from the practice of household baptism, as related in the Scriptures. This argument rests not merely upon the inquiry whether, in the instances recorded in the New Testament, there were children belonging to those particular households; but upon these examples, which evidently authorize the administration of the ordinance to *families collectively*. The repeated and familiar mention of household baptism, implies that it was a common usage to administer the ordinance to whole families or households collectively. Now if this is an usage authorized by the example of the apostles, it is a valid argument for infant baptism. Children usually constitute a part of a household; and baptism *by households*, of necessity, implies infant baptism.

Of these household baptisms we have several instances in the New Testament. Lydia, a native of Thyatira, was settled at Philippi, as appears from her having a house at which she entertained Paul and his party, Silas, Luke, &c. Her heart was opened that she attended to the things spoken by Paul, no intimation being given of the faith or conversion of any other member of her family until her baptism. She was baptized, *and her household*, i. e. *her family*. Acts xvi. 15. The jailer was also baptized, *he and all his*, straightway. Acts xvi. 33. Thus the church at Philippi, just organized by the apostles, and consisting apparently of few members, offers two instances of household baptism, or baptism by families. To these may be added the family of Cornelius. Acts x. 48.

At Corinth, also, *two families* were baptized, that of Crispus and that of Stephanas. The latter was "the first fruits of Achaia," Acts xviii. 8; 1 Cor. i. 14-16. By a comparison of these passages it appears, as Taylor has remarked, this Crispus, the head of his family, was baptized by Paul, *separately from his family*, which was not baptized by Paul; and that the *family* of Stephanas was

*baptized* by Paul, *separately from its head or father*, who himself was not baptized by Paul, directly contrary to what we have remarked of Crispus."

"But if we admit that the family of Crispus was *baptized*, because we find it registered as *believing*, then we must admit the same of all other families which we find marked as Christians, though they be not expressly described as *baptized*. That of Onesiphorus, 1 Tim. i. 16, 18, and iv. 19; which the apostle distinguishes by most hearty good-will *for their father's sake*, not for their own, and to which he sends a particular salutation. Also that of Aristobulus, and that of Narcissus, Rom. xvi. 10, 11; which are described as being 'in Christ.' We have this evidence on this subject: *four* Christian families recorded as *baptized*—that of Cornelius, of Lydia, of the jailer, and of Stephanas. *Two* Christian families not noticed as baptized—that of Crispus, and of Onesiphorus. *Two* Christian families mentioned neither as families nor baptized—that of Aristobulus, and of Narcissus. *Eight Christian* families, and therefore baptized: although as there was no such thing previously as a Christian family, there could be no children of converts to receive the ordinance.

"Have we eight instances of the administration of the Lord's supper? Not half the number. Have we eight cases of the change of the Christian Sabbath from the Jewish? Not, perhaps, one-fourth of the number. Yet those services are vindicated by the practice of the apostles as recorded in the New Testament. How then can we deny their practice on the subject of infant baptism, when it is established by a series of more numerous instances than can possibly be found in support of any doctrine, principle, or practice derived from the practice of the apostles? Is there any other case, besides that of baptism, in which we would take families at hazard, and deny the existence of young children in them? Take eight families at a venture in the street, or eight pews containing families in a place of worship: they will afford *more than one* young child."<sup>9</sup>

## § 7. LIMITATIONS AND EXCEPTIONS.

1. It was enacted that none but the *living* should be baptized—a law which intimates that this ordinance was sometimes administered to the dead. Such, indeed, was the custom of the church in Africa in the fourth century, as appears from the decrees of their councils



in which it is forbidden.<sup>1</sup> It appears also to have been the practice of some of the Cataphrygians or Montanists.<sup>2</sup>

2. The vicarious baptism of the living for the dead may also be mentioned in this place. Several religious sects, particularly the Marcionites, practised this rite, alleging for their authority a misconstruction of the apostle's language in 1 Cor. xv. 29. But the custom is severely censured by Tertullian,<sup>3</sup> and by Chrysostom,<sup>4</sup> who describes the ceremony as a ridiculous theatrical farce. Epiphanius,<sup>5</sup> Theodoret, and others understand the passage in question from 1 Cor. xv. 29, to relate to the practice of baptizing catechumens who might be near to death before the completion of their term of probation and preparation.

3. The offspring of untimely and monstrous births appear not to have been the subjects of baptism in the ancient church. Such baptisms began in the thirteenth century to be the subject of discussion in ecclesiastical councils.<sup>6</sup>

4. It was a disputed point in the ancient church, whether or not demoniacs and maniacs were proper subjects of baptism. The rule in these cases seems to have been that such persons should not receive baptism until they were healed of their malady, although they were permitted, in the mean time, to attend at the preaching of the word, and at public prayers, under the superintendence of the exorcists; and were ranked in the first class of catechumens. Cyprian supposed that evil spirits were expelled by baptism;<sup>7</sup> but he appears not to have authorized the administration of the ordinance to such, except in case of sickness, or of great bodily weakness. These enervated persons were, however, in some instances permitted to partake of the Lord's supper. And this circumstance affords the strongest proof that they were sometimes baptized.<sup>8</sup> Persons in the near approach of death were, in almost all cases, permitted to receive this ordinance.<sup>9</sup>

5. Baptism administered in cases of extreme sickness, without the consent or consciousness of the patient, was considered valid; and yet such persons, as a rebuke to them for delaying their duty in this respect, if they recovered, were not usually eligible to the highest offices of the church.<sup>10</sup>

6. The deaf and dumb were received to this ordinance, provided they gave credible evidence of their faith.<sup>11</sup>

7. In the sixth and seventh centuries it became customary to compel many Jews and pagans to receive baptism; and some instances occur of compulsory baptism of a date still earlier; but

such instances of violence were not authorized by the church.<sup>12</sup> In general, the free will and consent of the individual was required as a condition of his baptism. In the case of infants, the request of their parents was regarded as their own until they arrived at years of discretion, when they were expected to acknowledge their own baptism by confirmation.

8. Baptism was administered whenever a reasonable doubt existed as to its having been administered.<sup>13</sup>

9. Children of unbelieving parents, when by any means submitted to the supervision or guardianship of professed Christians, were baptized. This was esteemed a great favour to such children, and was especially bestowed upon the offspring of the Jews.

10. Not only were the openly immoral excluded from baptism, but generally all who were engaged in any immoral and unlawful pursuits, such as those who ministered to idolatry by manufacturing images or other articles for purposes of superstition,<sup>14</sup> stage-players,<sup>15</sup> gladiators, wrestlers, and all who were addicted to theatrical exhibitions;<sup>16</sup> astrologers, diviners, conjurers, fortune-tellers, dancing-masters, strolling minstrels, etc.<sup>17</sup>

The reason for all these prohibitions lay in the immoral and idolatrous tendency of the practices to which these persons were addicted. Many of these practices were immoral and scandalous even among the heathen. Tertullian observes "that they who professed these arts were noted with infamy, degraded, and denied many privileges, driven from court, from pleading, from the senate, from the order of knighthood, and all other honours in the Roman city and commonwealth."<sup>18</sup> Which is also confirmed by St. Austin, who says that no actor was ever allowed to enjoy the freedom or any other honourable privilege of a citizen of Rome.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, since this was so infamous and scandalous a trade even among the heathen, it is no wonder that the church would admit none of this calling to baptism, without obliging them first to bid adieu to so ignominious a profession. To have done otherwise, would have been to expose herself to reproach. It would have given occasion to the adversary to blaspheme, if men of such lewd and profligate practices had been admitted to the privileges of the church, who were excluded from the liberties of the city and the honors of the commonwealth. The learned Hieronymus Mercurialis<sup>20</sup> observes that 'the several sorts of heathen games and plays were instituted upon a religious account, in honour of the gods; and men thought they

were doing a grateful thing to them while they were engaged in such exercises.”

With good reason, therefore, the church refused to admit any of this calling to baptism, unless they first abandoned their ignominious pursuits. The ancient fathers were particularly severe in their invectives against theatrical exhibitions. They declared it incompatible with the piety and the purity of Christian life, either to engage in them as an actor or to attend them as a spectator. Tertullian, in speaking of a Christian woman who returned from the theatre possessed with a devil, makes the unclean spirit, on being asked how he dared presume to make such an attempt upon a believer, reply “that he had a good right to her, because he found her upon his own ground.”<sup>21</sup>

The profane custom of baptizing bells, etc., is a superstition that was unknown to the primitive church. It is first mentioned with censure in the Capitulars of Charlemagne in the eighth century, and became prevalent in the later centuries.

#### § 8. OF MINISTERS OF BAPTISM.

GREAT importance has ever been attached to this ordinance as the initiatory rite of admission to the church. But the duty of administering the ordinance does not appear to have been restricted to any officer of the church. John the Baptist himself baptized them that came to him. But our Lord baptized not, but his disciples. John iv. 2. There is, indeed, a tradition that our Saviour baptized St. Peter; that Peter baptized Andrew, James, and John; and that these disciples administered the rite to others.<sup>1</sup> To this tradition Roman Catholic writers attach much importance; but it rests on no good foundation.

In some instances recorded in the New Testament, baptism was administered under the sanction and by the immediate order of the apostles. But it is remarkable that the apostles themselves are seldom related to have administered baptism. No intimation is given that Peter assisted in baptizing the three thousand, nor is it probable that the ordinance could have been administered to them by himself alone. Acts ii. 41. He only *commanded* Cornelius and his family to be baptized. Acts x. 48. Paul, in 1 Cor. i. 12–17, and Peter, in Acts x. 36–48, evidently describes the administration of baptism as a subordinate office, compared with that of preaching peace by Jesus Christ.

On the whole, we learn from the New Testament the following particulars:—1. Our Lord himself did not baptize, but he intrusted his apostles and disciples with the administration of this rite. 2. The apostles, though they sometimes administered baptism themselves, usually committed this office to others. 3. It cannot be determined whether other persons, either ministers or laymen, were allowed to baptize without a special commission. 4. Philip, the deacon, baptized in Samaria men and women, Simon Magus, and the Ethiopian eunuch, although no mention is made of any peculiar commission for this purpose. This he appears to have received at his consecration to his office, as related Acts vi. 3–7.

Justin Martyr, in his description of this ordinance, says nothing of the person by whom it was administered. But in speaking of the Lord's supper in the same connection, he ascribes both the administration of that ordinance and the exposition of the Scriptures to the president of the brethren; from which the supposition would seem not altogether improbable that baptism was not administered by the presiding officer of the church.

We have, however, good evidence that after the second century the bishop was regarded as the regular minister of baptism. Tertullian says expressly that "the bishop has the power of administering baptism; and next in order the presbyters and deacons, though not without the sanction of the bishop, that thus the order and peace of the church may be preserved."\* He adds, that under other circumstances the laity may exercise this right; but advises that it should be done with reverence and modesty, and only in cases of necessity. Women are utterly forbidden by him to exercise this right. The Apostolical Constitutions accord this right to bishops and presbyters, the deacons assisting them; but denies the right to readers and singers, and other inferior officers of the church.<sup>2</sup> It is worthy of remark that here bishops and presbyters are placed on an equality, while deacons are made subordinate.

The sentiments of the Eastern church were coincident with those of the Western in relation to the ministers of baptism.

The officiating minister, as well as the candidate, was expected to prepare himself for performing this service by fasting, prayer, and, sometimes, washing of the hands;<sup>3</sup> and to be clothed in white.<sup>4</sup>

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\* Baptismum dandi habet jus summus sacerdos, qui est episcopus; dehinc presbyteri et diaconi; non tamen sine episcopi auctoritate propter ecclesiæ honorem; quo salvo, salva pax est.—*De Bap.* c. xvii.

Lay baptism, of which frequent mention is made in the early history of the church, was undoubtedly treated as valid by the laws and usages of the ancient church. It is equally certain, however, that it was not authorized as a general rule, but only admitted as an exception in cases of emergency.

### § 9. OF THE TIMES OF BAPTISM.

THE time of administering the rite was subject to various changes from age to age, of which the most important are given below in their chronological order :

1. In the apostolic age the administration of this ordinance was subject to no limitations either of time or place. Acts ii. 4; viii. 38; ix. 18; x. 47; xvi. 33.

2. The account of Justin Martyr gives no definite information on this point; but it would seem from this author that baptism was regarded as a public and solemn act, suitable to be performed in any assembly convened for religious worship. Tertullian, however, speaks of *Easter* and *Whitsuntide*, corresponding to the Passover and Pentecost of the Jews, as the most appropriate seasons for administering this rite, and appeals, not to tradition, but to arguments of his own, in confirmation of his opinion.<sup>1</sup> Other writers refer to apostolical tradition and an ancient rule of the church.<sup>2</sup>

3. In the sixth century, the whole period between the Passover and Pentecost, and Easter and Whitsuntide above mentioned, were established by several councils as the regular times for baptism, cases of necessity only being excepted.<sup>3</sup> The ordinance, however, was usually administered by common consent, not by any authority of the church, during the night preceding these great festivals. Easter-eve, or the night preceding the great Sabbath, was considered the most sacred of all seasons. And this period, while our Lord lay entombed in his grave, and just before his resurrection, was regarded as most appropriate for this solemn ordinance, which was supposed to be deliverance from the power of sin and consecration to newness of life.<sup>4</sup> Comp. Rom. vi. 3.

The illuminations on this night, which are mentioned by several writers, had special reference to the spiritual illumination supposed to be imparted by this ordinance, which was denominated *φῶτισμα*, *φωτισμός*, *φωτιστήριον*, *illumination*, as has been already mentioned in § 1. For similar reasons, baptism, which was considered peculiarly the sacrament of the Holy Ghost, was regarded as ap-



propriate on the day of Pentecost, Whitsuntide, commemorative of the descent of the Holy Spirit.

4. To the festivals above mentioned, that of Epiphany was early added as a third baptismal season; the day on which our Lord received baptism being regarded as peculiarly suited to the celebration of this ordinance. It appears probable, however, from a sermon of Chrysostom on this festival,<sup>5</sup> that this was not observed as a baptismal season by the churches of Antioch and Constantinople. Gregory Nazianzen, on the other hand, appears to have been acquainted with the custom of baptizing on this day. It was also observed in the churches of Jerusalem and of Africa. In Italy and France it was discountenanced.

The churches of France and Spain were accustomed to baptize at Christmas and on the festivals of the apostles and martyrs.

The observance of these days was not considered by the churches as essential to the validity of baptism, or as an institution of Christ or his apostles, but as a becoming and useful regulation. "Every day is the Lord's," says Tertullian, "every hour, every season is proper for baptism."<sup>6</sup>

From the tenth century the observance of stated seasons for baptism fell into disuse, though a preference still remained for the ancient seasons. Children were required to be baptized within a month from their birth, at eight days of age, or as soon as possible.

The church at different times manifested a superstitious regard for different hours of the day, choosing sometimes the hours of our Saviour's agony on the cross; at another, the hours from six to twelve; and at another, from three until six in the afternoon. These in times fell into disuse. In Protestant churches, no particular hour or day is observed for the celebration of baptism. It is, for the most part, administered on the Sabbath, during divine worship, and in the presence of the congregation. If upon another day of the week, it is to be attended with appropriate religious solemnities.

#### § 10. OF THE PLACE OF BAPTISM.

ALL the requisite information in regard to the appropriate place for administering this ordinance, may be arranged under three distinct periods of history:—1. The first ages of Christianity. 2. The space of time during which baptisteries detached from the churches

were provided for this purpose. 3. The period after the disuse of baptisteries, and of stated seasons for baptism.

*First Period.*—No intimation is given in the New Testament that any place was set apart for the administration of baptism. John and the disciples of Jesus baptized in Jordan. John iii. 22. Baptism was also administered in other streams of water, Acts vii. 36, 37; xvi. 1–16, and in private houses. Acts ix. 18; x. 47, 48; xvi. 30–34. Where the three thousand on the day of Pentecost were baptized is uncertain.

The same freedom of choice was also allowed in the age immediately succeeding that of the apostles. Justin Martyr says that the candidates were led out to some place where there was water,<sup>1</sup> and Clement of Rome speaks of a river, a fountain, or the sea, as a suitable place, according to circumstances, for the performance of this rite.<sup>2</sup> Tertullian says that “it was immaterial where a person was baptized, whether in the sea, or in standing or running water, in fountain, lake, or river.”<sup>3</sup>

*Second Period.*—The first baptistery, or place appropriated for baptism, of which any mention is made, occurs in a biography of the fourth century, and this was prepared in a private house.<sup>4</sup> Eusebius probably speaks of similar baptisteries, though under another name.<sup>5</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem speaks of the baptisteries in his day as divided into two parts, outer and inner.<sup>6</sup> In the former part, preparation was made for baptism; in the latter, it was administered. Ambrose speaks of a similar division;<sup>7</sup> and Augustin of a part appropriated to women.<sup>8</sup> These baptisteries became general in the fifth and sixth centuries. They were sometimes so spacious that ecclesiastical councils were held in them. Some idea of their size may be formed, when we recollect that in some places, as Antioch, no less than three thousand persons of both sexes received baptism in a single night. The laws both of church and state required that baptism should be administered only in these places.

The common name of these edifices was βαπτιστήριον. It is also called φωτιστήριον, *aula baptismatis*, κολυμβήδρα, or *piscina*, *the font*, etc.

Each diocese had, usually, but one baptistery. The number, however, was sometimes increased. But a preference was uniformly given to the cathedral baptistery. This was styled the *mother church*, inasmuch as the children were there born by baptism.<sup>9</sup>

*Third Period.*—In process of time these baptisteries became

greatly multiplied, and were united to parish churches, or rather, were themselves constituted such. The precise period of time when this change took place cannot be determined. In general, it was after the prevalence of Christianity and of infant baptism, when stated seasons of baptism were discontinued, and the right of administering the ordinance was conceded to the clergy indiscriminately.

#### § 11. OF THE ELEMENT FOR BAPTISM.

THE church with great uniformity has maintained that water is the only appropriate element for baptism. But several of the fathers very early advanced notions respecting the actual presence of the Spirit in the water, strikingly analogous to the modern doctrine of transubstantiation, and sought out many fanciful reasons why water should be used as the emblem of the Spirit. This water acquired in their opinion, as it would seem, a spiritual virtue, derived from the real presence of the Spirit residing in the water,<sup>1</sup> or the mysterious blending of the blood of Christ. Similar sentiments were entertained by Luther, and no doubt are the foundation of the doctrine of baptismal regeneration wherever that is taught. In case of necessity, baptism with wine was allowed, but not in the earliest ages of the church. The schoolmen wearied themselves with vain discussions respecting the validity of baptism with wine, and milk, and brandy, and almost every conceivable element. These puerilities, however, relate to an age subsequent to that of the primitive church, when all spirituality was well nigh lost in the observance of idle forms.

The baptismal water was exorcised, and consecrated by religious rites, and by prayer, before it was used in baptism.<sup>2</sup>

#### § 12. OF THE MODE AND FORM OF BAPTISM.<sup>1</sup>

To this head belong, 1. The manner in which the candidate for baptism received the appointed element, *water*. 2. The ceremonies observed by the officiating persons in administering the ordinance. In regard to both of these points, considerable difference of opinion and usage prevailed in the ancient church, from a very early period; nor are the Eastern and Western churches to this day agreed in this matter. This difference, however, has uniformly been treated as of less importance by the latter than by the former church.

1. *Immersion or Dipping*.—In the primitive church, immediately

subsequent to the age of the apostles, this was undeniably the common mode of baptism. The utmost that can be said of *sprinkling* in that early period is, that it was, in case of necessity, permitted as an exception to a general rule. This fact is so well established that it were needless to adduce authorities in proof of it. The reader will be directed to them by reference to the index of authorities;<sup>2</sup> but there are some points in connection with this rite which require particular attention.

It is a great mistake to suppose that baptism by immersion was discontinued when infant baptism became generally prevalent: the practice of immersion continued even until the thirteenth or fourteenth century. Indeed, it has never been formally abandoned; but is still the mode of administering infant baptism in the Greek church and in several of the Eastern churches.

Trine immersion was early practised in the church. The sacramentary of Gregory the Great directs that the person to be baptized should be immersed at the mention of each of the persons of the Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.<sup>3</sup> Tertullian says, "We receive the water of baptism not merely once, but three times, at the mention of each of the persons of the Holy Trinity;"<sup>4</sup> and again, "We are plunged thrice in the water of baptism." Basil the Great,<sup>5</sup> Jerome,<sup>6</sup> and Ambrose,<sup>7</sup> believed this custom to have been introduced by the apostles, though no authority for this supposition is found in the New Testament. Other of the fathers supposed the practice of trine immersion to refer not to the three persons in the Godhead, but to the three great events which completed the work of our redemption—the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ.<sup>8</sup>

Single immersion was at times considered valid. This decision was given by Gregory the Great, in a controversy with the Arians in Spain, who maintained that trine immersion denoted *three gradations* in the Godhead. Gregory, on the contrary, declared baptism by single immersion to be valid, and aptly significant of the *unity* of the Deity.<sup>9</sup> This decision was afterward confirmed by the Council of Toledo,<sup>10</sup> A. D. 633.

In the early centuries, all persons who received baptism were completely undressed, without distinction of age or sex;<sup>11</sup> this circumstance was thought to be emblematical of the putting off the old man, and the putting on of the new,—the putting away of the defilements of the flesh, etc. Great care was taken to guard this extraordinary custom from wanton abuse and perversion; but with all

due precaution, it was frequently the occasion of improprieties. A sense of decency at length prevailed against this unaccountable superstition, and it was by degrees discontinued.

2. *Aspersio or Sprinkling*.—After the lapse of several centuries this form of baptism gradually took the place of immersion, without any established rule of the church or formal renunciation of the rite of immersion. The form was not esteemed essential to the validity of the ordinance.

The Eastern church, however, in direct opposition to these views, has uniformly retained the form of immersion as indispensable to the validity of the ordinance, and repeated the rite whenever they have received to their communion persons who had been previously baptized in another manner.<sup>12</sup> The Greek and Armenian churches, both of which are strict pædobaptists, uniformly baptize either by immersion, or by affusion, pouring.

In defence of the usage of the Western church, the following considerations are offered:—

1. The primary signification of the word cannot be of great importance, inasmuch as the rite itself is typical, and therefore derives its importance, not from the literal import of the phrase, but from the significancy and design of the ordinance.

2. Though no instance of baptism by sprinkling is mentioned in the New Testament, yet there are several cases in which it is hardly possible that it could have been administered by immersion. Acts x. 47, 48; xvi. 32, 33; ii. 41.

3. In cases of emergency, baptism by aspersio was allowed at a period of high antiquity. Cyprian especially says that this was legitimate baptism when thus administered to *the sick*. When performed in faith on the part of the minister and the subject, he maintains that the whole is done with due fidelity, and agreeably to the majesty of the divine character.\*

This form was also admitted when the baptismal font was too small for the administration of the rite by immersion;<sup>13</sup> and generally, considerations of convenience and of health and climate are mentioned as having influence in regard to the form of administering the ordinance.†

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\* Unde apparet adpersionem quoque aquæ instar salutaris lavacri obtinere, et quando hæc in ecclesia fiunt ubi sit et accipientis et dantis fides integra, stare omnia, et consummari ac perfici posse majestate Domini et fidei veritate.—*Epist.* 76.

† Notandum non solum, mergendo verum etiam desuper fundendo, multos bap



Aspersion did not become general in the West until the thirteenth century, though it appears to have been introduced some time before that period. Thomas Aquinas says it is safer to baptize by immersion, because this is the general practice. *Tutius est baptizare per modum immersionis, quia hoc habet communis usus.*<sup>14</sup>

### *Form of Words used at Baptism.*

FROM the time of Justin Martyr and the Apostolical Constitutions the liturgical books of all religious denominations have retained one and the same form of words: though they may have disagreed in their explanation of the form, they have still retained it unaltered. Even those who deny the doctrine of the Trinity, retain the same form; so that Augustin says it were easier to find heretics who do not baptize at all, than any who do not use this form of words in their baptism;<sup>15</sup> namely, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

It is remarkable that the earliest fathers, with respect to this baptismal formulary, do not appeal to tradition as in many other things relating to baptism; but to the words prescribed by Christ himself. To them Justin Martyr evidently refers, though he does not mention them as a prescribed form.<sup>16</sup> Tertullian represents it as a definite and prescribed formulary: *Lex tingendi imposita et forma præscripta*;<sup>17</sup> so also Cyprian.<sup>18</sup> The Apostolical Constitutions and canons require the use of this form, under severe penalties.<sup>19</sup>

Instead of εἰς τὸ ὄνομα, into the name, the phrase in Acts ii. 38, is ἐπὶ τὸ ὄνομα; and in Acts x. 48, ἐν τὸ ὄνομα, in the name. The same phraseology is familiar with the earliest of the fathers, as Tertullian, and Ambrose, and Cyprian.<sup>20</sup> It is also the rendering of the Vulgate; but it is uncertain whether the original gave occasion for this latter usage, or whether it was designed to be an interpretation of the original εἰς τὸ ὄνομα.

It was an ancient practice to omit the word ὄνομα; but the

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tizatos fuisse, et adhuc posse ita baptizari si necessitas sit; sicut in passione S. Laurentii quendam, urceo allato, legimus baptizatum. Hoc etiam solet venire quum prorektorum granditas corporum in minoribus vasis hominem tingi non patitur.—Quare cum in ecclesia, præsertim locis septentrionalibus propterea aeris frigiditatem teneris infantibus aqua lotis facile nocituram, adpersio, vel potius adfusio aquæ usitata sit; ideo hæc baptismi forma retinenda nec propter vitium adiaphorum lites cum ecclesiæ scandalo movendæ.—WALAF. STRABO, *De Reb. Eccl.* c. xxvi. JO. GERHARD, *Loc. Theol.* t. ix. 146.

omission was not supposed to vary the significancy of the formulary, both being used indiscriminately by Jerome and Tertullian.

Baptism in the name of *Christ alone* was regarded as valid, but was discountenanced as an irregularity.<sup>21</sup>

In the Greek church, baptism is administered in the third person instead of the first, that is to say, the officiating minister, instead of saying "I baptize thee," uses the form, "This person is baptized," etc.

### § 13. OF THE RITES CONNECTED WITH BAPTISM.

#### (a) *Ceremonies before Baptism.*

1. *Catechetical instruction.*—A solemn preparation was required before the baptism of adults in the ancient church. This preparation consisted, in part, in a course of instruction in the leading doctrines and mysterious rites of their religion; and partly in certain prescribed exercises immediately preceding the administration of the sacred rite. The religious instructions were the same that have been already detailed in treating of catechumens, and need not be repeated in this place. They are given at length in the Apostolical Constitutions, the Catechism of Cyril of Jerusalem, the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy of the Pseudo-Dionysius, and the works of Chrysostom, Ambrose, and Augustin.<sup>1</sup>

2. *Exorcism.*<sup>2</sup>—The historical facts in relation to baptismal exorcisms appear to be as follows:—1. In the first century there appears no trace of any renunciation of the devil in baptism. 2. In the second and third centuries, this was in use, as appears from the testimony of Tertullian and Cyprian; but it is observed that they expressly appeal, not to the Scriptures, but to *tradition*, for their authority on this subject. 3. In the fourth century the fathers speak of exorcism, not as being absolutely necessary, nor as being enjoined in the Scriptures, but highly beneficial, inasmuch as, without it, children born of Christian parents would not be free from the influence of evil spirits.<sup>3</sup>

Cyril of Jerusalem, of the fourth century, is the first writer who makes mention of the form of exorcism. By him it is detailed somewhat at length. It had now become a part of the formalism which already encumbered the entire ritual of the church instead of the simple rites of the primitive church. The ceremonies connected with it were, with the exception of circumstantial variations, the following:—

(a) Preliminary fasting, prayers, and genuflexions. These, however, may be regarded as general preliminaries to baptism.

(b) Imposition of hands upon the head of the candidate, who stood with his head bowed down in a submissive posture.<sup>4</sup>

(c) Putting off the shoes and clothing, with the exception of an under garment.<sup>5</sup>

(d) Facing the candidate to the west, which was the symbol of darkness, as the east was of light.<sup>6</sup> In the Eastern church he was required to thrust out his hand toward the west, as if in the act of pushing away an object in that direction. This was a token of his abhorrence of Satan and his works, and his determination to resist and repel them.

(e) A renunciation of Satan and his works, thus, "I renounce Satan and his works, and his pomps and his services, and all things that are his."<sup>7</sup> This, or a similar form, was thrice repeated.

(f) The exorcist then breathed upon the candidate either once or three times, and adjured the unclean spirit, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to come out of him.<sup>8</sup>

This form of adjuration seems not to have been in use until the fourth century; and these several formalities were apparently introduced gradually and at different times. The whole ceremony was at first confined to the renunciation of "the devil and his works" on the part of the person about to be baptized.

3. *A confession of faith.*—This, from the beginning, was a requisite preliminary of baptism. The Ethiopian eunuch was baptized on his confession of faith in Christ as the Son of God. Acts viii. 37. Jewish converts, under the apostles, confessed their belief in Jesus as the Messiah, and the Gentiles, in addition to this, expressed their belief in God. Neander and Guericke find indications of such a confession in 1 Tim. vi. 12; iii. 16, and especially in Matt. xxviii. 19. But these confessions were subsequently drawn out more fully in opposition to prevailing errors of Jews, pagans, and heretics. The confessions were first transmitted by tradition,<sup>9</sup> and then committed to writing at an early period, and diligently taught to the candidates for baptism. These topics have been duly considered under the head of Catechumens and Creeds. From the latter part of the second century the confession was administered to the professing candidate by distinct questions and answers,<sup>10</sup> to which confession they were also required in the fourth century to set their hand and seal by their own signature, or by that of a representative, if the candidate was unskilled in writing.

This covenant, as a condition of admission to the church, is a circumstance of great interest, and should be held in distinct remembrance as an uniform requisition of the church. It appears from Pliny's letter to Trajan, "to have been a *mutual covenant* between professing Christians, and the ground of their mutual fellowship and discipline."<sup>11</sup> The solemnity with which they assumed their covenant vows, and subscribed them with their own hand, indicates the importance which these primitive saints attached to their sacred relations as members of the church of Christ. The subject may come into notice again in another chapter. We dismiss it for the present with the following citation from Neander:—

"With the oral confession of faith was also connected the avowal of a moral engagement. The transaction was looked upon in the following light: the candidate for baptism separated himself from the kingdom of sin, of darkness, of Satan, which, as a heathen devoted to his lusts, he had hitherto served, and came over to the kingdom of God and of Christ. He was now, therefore, solemnly to renounce all fellowship with that kingdom of which he had before been a subject. Giving his hand to the bishop, he solemnly declared that he renounced the devil and all his pomps—meaning particularly by these the pagan shows, and things of a like nature—and his angels—an expression probably based on the notion that the heathen gods were evil spirits, who had seduced mankind. This form of renunciation, which we meet with in the second century, should be distinguished from the *exorcism*, which could not have sprung so early out of the prevailing mode of thinking in Christian antiquity. This, like the confession of faith, had reference to what the candidate was bound on his part to do, in order to enjoy the benefit of baptism. As in Christianity faith and hope are closely conjoined, so the renunciation accompanied the confession. Hence we find in the second century no trace as yet of any such form of exorcism against the evil spirit. But the tendency to confound the inward with the outward, the inclination to the magical, the fondness for pomp and display, caused that those forms of exorcism which had been employed in the case of the energumens or demoniacally possessed, should be introduced in the baptism of all heathens."<sup>12</sup>

4. *Covenant, or vow.*—A subscription to the creed was required at baptism, accompanied with a seal. The whole transaction was regarded as a most solemn covenant on the part of the person baptized, by which he publicly, and with many impressive formalities,

renounced the world, the flesh, and the devil, and gave himself up to Christ, to be his for ever, covenanting henceforth to live in conformity with these obligations. To this covenant they thus set their hand and seal. By the Greeks this was styled *σφραγίς*, and the like; by the Latins, *fœdus*, *pactum*, *votum*, etc., a seal, a promise, a covenant, a vow. St. Ambrose calls it a promise, a caution, an handwriting, or bond, given to God, and registered in the court of heaven, because it is made before his ministers, and the angels, who are witnesses to it. Many others speak of it in terms of similar import.

5. *Signing with the sign of the cross.*—To this Christians now attached great importance, and ascribed to it a wonderful efficacy. It was, moreover, the sign and seal of faith, the surrendry of the candidate up to Christ, and the solemn indication that he had passed from a state of sin to a state of grace. It was given after the ceremony of exorcism, and immediately before baptism, the officiating person saying, "Receive thou the sign of the cross upon thy forehead and on thy heart."<sup>13</sup>

6. *Unction, or anointing with oil.*—There were two anointings, one before and one after baptism. The latter was called, by way of distinction, *chrism*. The former immediately followed the signing of the cross. This is first mentioned by Tertullian. Nothing was known of the latter ceremony until the third or fourth century; neither are writers agreed respecting the significancy of the rite. Cyril of Jerusalem says, "Men were anointed from head to foot with this consecrated oil, and this made them *partakers of the true olive-tree—Jesus Christ*." Others refer it to the ancient custom of anointing wrestlers for the combat. Others suppose that it assimilated to Christ, the *anointed* of the Lord; others again, that it symbolized the anointing of the Spirit.<sup>14</sup>

7. *Use of salt, and milk, and honey.*—These were generally administered to the candidate as emblems, as it would seem, of spiritual things, with reference to the frequent mention of these things in the Scriptures. The milk and honey were emblems of the Christian as a *child* of God; such a mixture being the common food for children. This emblem was used as early as the fourth century—that of salt was introduced at a later period.

To all these ceremonies the Romish church added that of applying spittle to the eyes and ears, in imitation of the example of Christ. Mark vii. 33, 34; John ix. 6.



(b) *Ceremonies after Baptism.*

1. *The kiss of peace.*—This is mentioned as being usual on this occasion as late as the fifth century.<sup>15</sup> But there is no evidence of the custom at a later period. It was given both to infants and adults. It appears to have been superseded by the simple salutation, *Pax tecum!* Peace be with you! but at what time is unknown.

2. *Chrism.*—This anointing is still in use in the East. In the Western church it has been transferred to the rites of confirmation at a later period after baptism.<sup>16</sup>

3. *Clothing in white apparel.*—These garments were worn as emblems of purity, the putting away of former defilements, etc. Thus the young disciple was arrayed in the white robes, in which saints and angels appear in heaven. This practice was in common use in the fourth century. The dress was worn by the newly baptized from Easter-eve until the Sunday after, which was from this circumstance called *Dominica in albis*—the Sunday in white. These garments were made usually of white linen, but sometimes of more costly materials, and were worn by the person who baptized as well as by the subjects of baptism.<sup>17</sup>

4. *The burning of lighted tapers.*—These were placed in the hands of the baptized, if adults; if they were infants, in the hands of the sponsors. These tapers were emblematical of the illuminating power of this ordinance.<sup>18</sup>

5. *The washing of the feet.*—This was at times a favourite ceremony in the churches of Africa and France, and is still retained in the Greek church.

6. *The giving of presents, the wearing of garlands and wreaths of flowers, public thanksgivings, singing of hymns, and baptismal festivals,* are all mentioned as festivities and rites connected with this ordinance.

§ 14. OF SPONSORS—WITNESSES AND SURETIES.

CERTAIN persons were required to be present at the baptism both of children and adults, as witnesses to the transaction, and as sureties for the fulfilment of the promises and engagements then made by those who received baptism. These appear, as early as the latter part of the second century, to have assumed the religious guar-

dianship of children in infant baptism, and from this ordinance the office was probably derived.

1. *Their names or appellations.*—These persons were first known by the name of *sponsors*. Tertullian uses this term; but he uses it only with reference to infant baptism, and supposes it to refer both to the reply, *responsum*, which they gave in behalf of the subject who was unable to speak for himself; and to a promise and obligation, on their part, which they assumed in behalf of the baptized for his fulfilment of the duties implied in this ordinance.<sup>1</sup> Augustin seems to limit the duty of sponsors to the response or answer.<sup>2</sup> They were called *fidejussores*, *fidedictores*, sureties; names found in Augustin and borrowed from Roman law.<sup>3</sup> Ἀντιδοχοί, corresponding to the Latin *offerentes* and *susceptores*, so called with reference to the assistance rendered to the candidates at their baptism. This service is described by Dionysius the Areopagite.<sup>4</sup> Chrysostom uses the word in the sense of *sureties*,<sup>5</sup> which is authorized by classical authority.<sup>6</sup> The appellation μαρτυρες, *testes*, witnesses, was unknown to the ancients, but familiar in later times. The more modern terms are, πατέρες, μητέρες, or πατέρες, μητέρες ἐπὶ τοῦ ἁγίου φωτισμάτος, *compadres*, *commatres*, *pro-patres*, *promatres*, *patrini*, *matrini*, godfathers and godmothers; *patres spirituales*, or *lustrici*, spiritual fathers, etc.

2. *Origin of this office.*—It has no foundation either in example or precept drawn from the Scriptures. No mention is made of the presence of any as *witnesses* in performing the rite of circumcision, nor in administering household baptism. Neither do the sacred writers ever draw a parallel between circumcision and baptism.

Some have derived the office from the customs of Roman law. Baptism was regarded as a stipulation, contract, or covenant, which, according to Roman law, was witnessed and ratified with great care. Many of the early Christians previous to their conversion had been conversant with Roman jurisprudence; and it may, very naturally, be supposed that in ratifying the solemn covenant of baptism, they would require witnesses; and adopt, as far as practicable, the same formalities with which they had been conversant in civil transactions.

The common tradition is that sponsors were first appointed by Hyginus, or Iginus, a Roman bishop, about the year 154. The office was in full operation in the fourth and fifth centuries. A time of oppression and persecution is likely to have given rise to an institution the design of which was to give additional security and attesta-

tion to the profession of the Christian religion. Men who made their baptismal vows in the presence of witnesses would not be so likely to deny their relations to the church as they would if no proof of their profession could be adduced. On the other hand, such sponsors might be equally useful in preventing the introduction of unworthy members into the church, when the profession of religion began to be desired as the means of preferment and emolument.

But the more probable supposition is, that the office in question took its rise from the necessity of having some one to respond in the behalf of infants, the sick, the deaf, and all who were incapable of replying to the interrogatories which were made at baptism. Slaves were not received to baptism without the consent of their masters, who in such cases became the sponsors or godfathers.

Two or three of these witnesses were probably required, and their names, as we learn from Dionysius, were entered in the baptismal register with that of the baptized person.<sup>7</sup>

3. *Duties of the sponsors.*—Their duties were, to serve as witnesses of the transaction, and to act as sureties for the baptized persons by exercising a religious supervision over them. The precise nature and extent of this supervision is involved in much uncertainty, and appears to have varied at different times. Augustin requires the godfathers and godmothers to hold in remembrance their spiritual children, and affectionately to watch over them; to preserve their morals uncorrupted; to guard them from licentiousness; to restrain them from profane and wanton speech, from pride, envy, and hatred, and from indulging in any magical arts; to preserve them from adopting heretical opinions; to secure their habitual attendance upon religious worship, and a profitable hearing of the word; to accustom them to acts of hospitality, to live peaceably with all men, and to render due honour to their parents, and to the priesthood.<sup>8</sup>

The sponsors did not become chargeable with the maintenance and education of such persons by assuming this guardianship of their Christian character.

4. *Persons who are allowed to act as sponsors.*—On this head a diversity of opinion prevails; but it will be sufficient for the present purpose to mention the principal rules and customs which prevailed in the church in relation to this subject.

1. The sponsor must himself be a baptized person in regular communion with the church. 2. He must be of adult age, and of

sound mind. 3. He must be acquainted with the fundamental truths of Christianity. He must know the creed, the ten commandments, the Lord's prayer, and the leading doctrines of faith and practice, and must duly qualify himself for his duties. 4. Monks and nuns were, in the early periods of the church, thought to be peculiarly qualified, by their sanctity of character, for this office; but they were excluded from it in the sixth century. 5. Parents were disqualified for the office of sponsor to their own children in the ninth century; but this order has never been generally enforced.

The number of sponsors was at first one. This number was afterward increased to two, three, and four; and then again, diminished to one, or two at the most. They were usually required to be of the same sex as those whose guardianship they assumed. If there were three sponsors, two were of the same sex as their spiritual ward, and one of the other. And this is the prevailing custom at the present day.

#### § 15. OF NAMES GIVEN AT BAPTISM.<sup>1</sup>

THE naming of a child has been esteemed a transaction of peculiar interest by all people, and under every form of religion. The onomatology of different nations opens an important field of investigation to the philologist, the historian, and the theological inquirer, for the illustration of national peculiarities. Jews, Mohammedans, and Christians, all indicate the common origin of their religion by the similarity of their names, drawn from the Scriptures of the Old Testament, such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, Daniel, Job, Tobias, Sarah, Miriam, Rebecca, Hannah, Susanna, etc.

The Jews derive many names from those who have been distinguished among the Levites and Pharisees, as Levi, Aaron, Phineas, Ezra, Nehemiah, etc.

Christian nations, on the contrary, derive their names from the Christian virtues, Grace, Faith, Temperance, etc.; also from the martyrs and apostles—Stephen, Peter, Paul, Polycarp, Matthew, Ursula, Clara, etc. Again, they compound names expressive of reverence and affection for God and for Christ, as Gottlieb, Gottlob, Theophilus, Christlieb, etc., *Beloved of God*, *God-loving*, etc.

The modern practice of giving the names at baptism probably originated with infant baptism. It may have been derived from

the rites of circumcision. No mention, however, is made of this practice either in the New Testament or in the early ecclesiastical writers. Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian, Constantine, Ambrose, Augustin, Gregory, etc. retained the same names after baptism which they had previously borne. But there are not wanting instances of a change of name at baptism, about the same period of time. Stephanus the bishop in baptizing two young people, Adria and Paulina, changed their names, giving the former the name of Neo, and the latter that of Maria.<sup>2</sup> Nemesius, after baptism by the same person, retained his original name, while his daughter was called by a new name, Lucilla. Eudokia, wife of Theodosius the emperor, received that name at her baptism.<sup>3</sup> Balsamus, on being asked his name, said, "*My surname is Balsamus, but my spiritual name, which I received at baptism, is Peter.*"

While the system of catechetical instruction preliminary to baptism continued, the name seemed to have been designated some time before the administration of that rite; as appears from the custom, often mentioned by writers of that period, of entering the names of candidates in the baptismal register.<sup>4</sup>

The name was assumed by the individual himself, if of adult age. Either the parents or sponsors conferred the name upon a child at his baptism. The right belonged, appropriately, to the parents. The minister by whom the rite was administered had, also, the right of refusing the name proposed, if it appeared to him to be objectionable.



## CHAPTER XX.

### OF CONFIRMATION.

#### § 1. ORIGIN OF THE RITE.

No authentic reference to confirmation is recorded either in the Scriptures or in the earliest ecclesiastical writers. It was not an ordinance either of the churches planted by the apostles or of the primitive churches of the first two centuries of the Christian era. The imposition of hands was, indeed, a familiar rite, which the Christian church had received from the Jewish. It was an induction into office, as in ordination, or for a specific mission. Acts xiii. 4. It was a significant rite in a benediction or prayer. Jacob laid his hands upon the sons of Joseph as he blessed them. Our Saviour laid his hands on young children and blessed them. Mark x. 76; Matt. xix. 15. By this act the apostles also imparted the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost. Acts viii. 17 *et seq.*; xix. 6. Such was the use of this rite in various offices of benediction, as well as of ordination, in the age of the apostles. But history records no instance of the imposition of hands in any office of initiation or benediction for some time subsequent to the age of the apostles. Justin Martyr, A. D. 150, gives a detailed account of the ordinance of baptism, and alleges that he enters into these details that he may not seem to omit any particular from sinister motives,\* but makes no mention of the imposition of hands. Tertullian, fifty years later, is the first to mention this rite, not, however, as a distinct act or ordinance, but simply as the concluding ceremony in baptism, in connection with prayer for the blessing of the Holy Spirit.† Mistaken views, however, had become widely prevalent respecting

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\* "Ὅπως μὴ τοῦτο παρὰ λόγους δοξῶμεν πονεῖν τι ἐν τῇ ἐξηγήσει.

† Ipsius baptismi carnalis actus quod in aqua mergimur; spiritalis effectus quod delictis liberamur. Dehinc manus imponitur *per benedictionem advocans et invitans Spiritum Sanctum.*—*De Baptism.* c. vii. 8.

the efficacy of outward ordinances. Baptism was supposed to have a sin-remitting power. Mysterious grace was sought in the celebration of the sacrament, and generally the outward form in religion had begun to be superstitiously substituted for the inward spirit.

Cyprian, fully possessed with these mistaken views of the Christian spirit, sees in the ministry a mediating priesthood commissioned of heaven for the celebration of these awful mysteries as the means of imparting grace to man, and perpetuated in the church through the apostolical succession. Baptism is with him regeneration, or rather the putting away of sin, *the washing of regeneration*. This is *negative* in its effect, rather than positive. To complete the renewal of the person regenerated thus, the effective, reviving, sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit must be superadded. These are to be imparted by a new and distinct rite—the imposition of hands, or confirmation. By this the active influences of the Spirit are communicated, to quicken into spiritual life, to sanctify, to confirm and seal unto eternal life the soul that has been regenerated by baptism. Thus we have two distinct rites, each fulfilling a separate office in the work of converting a soul to God. These, under Cyprian, become two distinct sacraments, neither of which is sufficiently efficacious of itself.\* Such, with this venerable father, is the *modus operandi* of regeneration. And this soon became the universal sentiment of the church. The sovereign offices of that mysterious, Divine Agent, who moves unperceived, as the wind bloweth where it listeth, and works unseen his miracles of grace in regeneration, are here degraded and debased to a mere mechanical operation, directed by a sinful being, who assumes in these awful rites to act as the vicegerent of God in dispensing grace to man. In this he is vainly deceiving himself with an outward symbol, grasp-

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\* *Et quod parum sit eis manum imponere ad accipiendum Spiritum Sanctum nisi accipiant et ecclesiæ baptismum. Tum enim demum plene sanctificari, et esse filii Dei possunt, si sacramento utroque nascentur quia scriptum sit. Nisi renatus fuerit ex aqua et Spiritu non potest introire regnum Dei.—Epist. 72. Quod si hæretico nec baptismi publicæ confessionis et sanguinis, proficere ad salutem potest, quia salus extra ecclesiam non est; quanto magis ei nihil proderit si in latebra et in latronum spelunca adulteræ contagione tinctus, non tantum peccata antiqua non exposuerit, sed adhuc potius nova et majora cumulaverit?—Ideo baptizari eos oportet qui de hæresi ad ecclesiam veniunt; ut qui legitimo et vero atque unico sanctæ ecclesiæ baptismi ad regnum Dei regeneratione divina preparantur, sacramento utroque nascentur quia scriptum: Nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua et Spiritu non potest intrare in regnum Dei.—Epist. 73. Comp. Epist. 72, 75; De Baptismate in Opp. Cyp.*

ing at a shadow, and groping "at noonday as the blind gropeth in darkness."

Such was the origin of the ordinance of confirmation which the Lutheran and the church of England have retained since the Reformation, from "the corrupt following" of the ancient and of the Romish church, and to which more or less of the mysterious efficacy which was ascribed to this rite is still attached by different members of these communions.

## § 2. MINISTERS OF CONFIRMATION AND ATTENDING RITES.

THE bishop, by right of his apostolic succession, is the reputed minister of confirmation, but presbyters were in some instances allowed to administer it. Even deacons occasionally exercised the same functions until peremptorily forbidden by the Council of Toledo, A. D. 398, c. 20. Brenner, a Roman Catholic writer, has written an extended history of confirmation, in which he has conclusively vindicated to presbyters the right of confirming, according to the usage of the ancient church.<sup>1</sup> Even the Council of Trent only decreed that the bishop is the ordinary minister of confirmation, which implies an exception in favour of the presbyter.

In the Latin church, after the separation of baptism from confirmation, a series of preliminary religious exercises was requisite for this rite, similar to those which had been previously required for baptism.

Names given in baptism were sometimes changed at confirmation. This, however, was merely an occasional practice of the later centuries.

Sponsors, or godfathers, or godmothers, were also required as in baptism formerly. These might be the same as the baptismal sponsors, or others might be substituted in their place.

A separate edifice for solemnizing this rite was in some instances provided, called *consignatorium albatorum*, and *chrismarium*. After the disuse of baptisteries, both baptism and confirmation were administered in the church, and usually at the altar.

## § 3. ADMINISTRATION OF THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION.

FOUR principal ceremonies were employed in the rites of confirmation, namely, imposition of hands, unction with the chrism, sign of the cross, and prayer.

1. *Imposition of hands*, which has been already mentioned. For an account of the different opinions which were entertained respecting this rite, and of the mode of administering it, see references in the index.<sup>1</sup>

2. *Unction*.—This, as has been already remarked, was denominated chrism, in distinction from the unction which was administered before baptism. In the Apostolical Constitutions it is styled the confirmation of our confession, and the seal of the covenants. A prayer is also given, which was offered on the occasion.<sup>2</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem, † 386, gives full instructions respecting the administration of chrism.<sup>3</sup> From his time it came into general use in the church.

The material used for this chrism was usually olive-oil. Sometimes perfumed ointment, compounded of various ingredients, was used. The chrism was consecrated by prayer, exorcism, and insufflation. It was applied, in the Western church, to various parts of the body, to the forehead, ears, nose, eyes, breast, etc. In the Eastern church it appears to have been applied only to the forehead, but Cyril of Jerusalem specifies other parts.

3. *Sign of the cross*.—This was affixed by applying the chrism in such a manner as to represent a cross. This was thought to be a very important and expressive emblem, the sealing rite, which gave to confirmation the name of σφραγίς, *a seal*.<sup>4</sup>

4. *Prayer and mode of confirmation*.—In the Greek church, one uniform mode of confirmation has been observed from the beginning, as follows: "The seal of the gift of the Holy Ghost. Amen." Besides this implied prayer, one more at length is supposed to have been offered. In the Latin church, the form has varied at different times. The most ancient form ran thus: "The seal of Christ to eternal life." The modern form, in the Roman Catholic church, is as follows: "*Signo te signo crucis, et confirmo te chrismate salutis in nomine Patris et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.*"

Other formalities were, the salutation, "Peace be with you;" a slight blow upon the cheek, to admonish the candidate of the duty of patience under injuries; unbinding of the band upon the forehead; prayer and singing; the benediction of the bishop, together with a short exhortation from him.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

#### § 1. OF THE NAMES OR APPELLATIONS OF THIS SACRAMENT.

MEN of all religious denominations have generally concurred in regarding the sacrament of the Lord's supper as the most solemn rite of Christian worship, the grand characteristic of the religion of Christ. For a full understanding of the doctrines and usages connected with this institution, a knowledge of the various names by which it has been distinguished is indispensable. A full knowledge of these, with all their relations to the times and places in which they were used, would almost furnish a history of the sacrament itself. These names are exceedingly numerous; and, although retaining a general similarity of meaning, yet each has been chosen out of regard to some peculiar views relating to the doctrine of the sacrament, or from a preference for some peculiar mode of administration. Very few of these appellations were known to the apostolical and primitive church. They belong to the liturgical service of the hierarchy, which in the third century began to incumber the simple and impressive ordinance of the Lord's supper with new and unauthorized rites, and to ascribe to it mysterious powers, for which neither the Scriptures nor the earliest usage of the Christian church gives the least authority. The following nomenclature, therefore, is to be regarded merely as belonging to the perversions of the hierarchy which began so early to corrupt the ordinances and worship of the Christian church.

1. The term, *the Lord's supper*, δειπνον κυριακόν, *sacra cœna*, *cœna Domini*, has an historical reference to the institution of the rite by our Lord, on the night in which he was betrayed. Matt. xxvi. 20, 31; 1 Cor. xi. 23. Some have erroneously maintained that the passage in 1 Cor. xi. 23, relates, not strictly to the participation of the sacramental elements, but to the feast which accompanied the distribution of these elements. But it has been abundantly



dantly shown that the early Christian writers understood and used the term according to the explanation given above.<sup>1</sup>

2. *The table of the Lord*, *τράπεζα κυρίου*, *mensa Dei*, denotes much the same as the Lord's supper, a festival instituted by the Lord. Tertullian styles it *convivium Dominicum*.<sup>2</sup> The context of 1 Cor. x. 21, forbids the supposition that a common table was used for this purpose. The apostle uses the term *τράπεζα κυρίου* as synonymous with *θυσιαστήριον*, *an altar*. We are constrained, therefore, to believe that a table was set apart for this sacred purpose, like that of the show-bread, a *mensa mystica*, a table sacred to the purpose of celebrating the Lord's supper.

3. The following scriptural expressions are also employed in a sense partly literal and partly figurative, to denote the sacrament: *bread—the breaking of bread*, Acts ii. 42; xx. 7 comp. xxvii. 35; Luke xxiv. 25—*the eating of bread*, John vi. 23—*the Lord's body; or his flesh*, John vi. 53; *the cup of the Lord*, 1 Cor. x. 21; *the cup of the New Testament*, Luke xxii. 20; 1 Cor. x. 21; *blood*. The custom of *breaking* the bread, and of administering but one element, has been derived from the foregoing passages.

4. *The New Testament in my blood*. Luke xxii. 20; 1 Cor. xi. 25. It has, however, been disputed whether this phrase can, with propriety, be applied to the sacrament of the Lord's supper.<sup>3</sup>

5. *Communion*, *κοινωνία*, *communio*. This is by far the most common appellation of the solemnity in question. It has been current in all ages and among all parties. It has been used, both in a doctrinal and mystical sense; and in an historical and ecclesiastical signification.

In a doctrinal sense, it has been supposed to represent our reconciliation to God, and our union with him. Others have supposed it to represent our union and fellowship with Christ. This participation with him, according to some, is through his presence in the elements. Others understand by it the union of believers *in spirit*, with their spiritual head; and others, again, the union of believers among themselves in the bonds of Christian love.

In an historical and ecclesiastical sense, communion denotes a participation in all the mysteries of the Christian religion, and, of course, church-fellowship, with all its rites and privileges. Hence the term *excommunication*.

In a liturgical sense it denotes, sometimes the partaking of the sacrament, and sometimes the administration of it.

6. *Agapæ*, *ἀγάπαι*, or *ἀγάπη*, *love-feast*, *feast of heaven*. The

expression in Jude xii., 2 Pet. ii. 13, may refer either to the Lord's supper or to the festival accompanying it.

7. *Eucharist*, εὐχαριστία, a very ancient and general appellation, founded on the scriptural expression εὐχαριστήσας. Matt. xxvi. 27; Mark xiv. 23; Luke xxii. 19; 1 Cor. xi. 24. The name *eucharist*, thanksgiving, was applied to this ordinance, because gratitude for the divine mercy and grace is the chief requisite in those who partake of it.<sup>4</sup>

8. *Εὐλογία*, *celebratio laudis*, *benedictio*, thanksgiving, synonymous with the preceding. Matt. xxvi. 26; Mark xiv. 22; 1 Cor. x. 16. After the fifth century this became the name for the consecrated bread which was set apart for the poor, and for the ministers of the church.

9. *Προσφορά*, *oblatio*, oblation. The literal signification of this word is a sacrificial offering, corresponding to the Hebrew כִּנְחָה, and the Syriac *corban*. It finally became synonymous with זֶבֶח. *θυσία*, a *sacrifice*. It is applied to the elements used in celebrating the Lord's supper. The later Greek writers used the word ἀναφορά, in a moral rather than a literal sense, in allusion to the customary exhortation, *Sursum corda!* "Lift up your hearts." The leading idea of the Latin, *offertorium*, is a voluntary offering; but it appears to have been applied especially to the consecrated bread.<sup>5</sup>

10. *Θυσία*, *sacrifice*. This term is, with great propriety, used by early Christian writers to denote the sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ, once offered for the sins of the world.<sup>6</sup> Other epithets of a similar import are *sacrificium spirituale*, *sanctum*, *mysticum*, *rationale*, etc., but more frequently, *θυσία ἀναιμάκτος*, the *bloodless sacrifice*. After the seventh century, it began to be used to designate the *mass*, which was offered in the Roman Catholic church for the dead, and accordingly fell into disuse with the evangelical church.

11. *Μυστήριον*, *mysterium*, mystery. This, coupled with the adjectives, φοβιχτόν, φοβιχῶδες, φοβιχδέσποτον, etc., *awful*, *tremendous*, is familiar phraseology with Chrysostom and Gregory Nazianzen; but they seem to use it with reference to the ritual, rather than to any implied doctrine. The Lord's supper, as the last and most solemn rite of the secret discipline, was styled by Pseudo-Dionysius, τελειὴν τελειῶν,<sup>7</sup> *perfection of perfections*. The name *μυστήριον*, which this ordinance received from its connection with the secret discipline, became the favourite phrase for setting forth

the wonderful presence of the body and blood of Christ, which finally ended in the doctrine of transubstantiation.<sup>8</sup>

12. *Μυσταγωγία*, used by Cyril of Jerusalem and Theodoret, with special reference to the secret discipline. After the termination of that system, it appears not to have been used by evangelical writers.

13. *Σύναξις*, i. e. *συναγωγή*, *congregatio*, *coetus*, *conventus sacer*, a solemn assembly. This phrase is of similar import with that of communion, with the additional idea of a solemn and public transaction. It indicates that this, in the primitive church, was the most important and solemn act of public worship.

14. *Ἱερουργία*, *operatio sacra*, sacred ministration. Supposed to have been derived from the expression, *ministering the gospel of God*, Rom. xv. 16; and used in the same general and figurative sense.

15. *Λειτουργία*, *public service*, *liturgy*. This, and its kindred terms, as used in the New Testament, relates to the service of the priesthood; and was, probably, used in the same sense by Chrysostom and Theodoret, etc. It became, however, the practice, both in the Eastern and Western churches, to apply this epithet to the sacrament of the Lord's supper. But in the Roman Catholic church, it finally gave place to the name *mass*.

16. *Mass*. This word has undergone a change from its simple origin and meaning, to another, more entirely different in use and signification than any other. Passing by various theories respecting the origin of this word which have been advanced and refuted, it will be sufficient briefly to set forth its true etymology.

The word is undoubtedly derived from the Latin *missa*, which stands for *missio*, or *dimissio populi*, with direct reference to the ancient mode of dismissing the people at the close of religious worship. From being a participle, it has become a noun substantive, for *missio*, like *remissa*, *æ*, for *remissio*, or *offensa*, *æ*, for *offensio*.

By the secret discipline of the ancient church, none but believers were permitted to be present at the celebration of the Lord's supper. But during a certain portion of religious worship all were allowed, indiscriminately, to attend. At the close of this part of the service, the catechumens and unbelievers of every description, were dismissed by the deacon who said, *Ite! missa est sc. ecclesia*, Depart! the assembly is dismissed. From this custom the religious service, which had just been concluded, was called *missa catechumenorum*, the service of the catechumens. Then followed

the *missa fidelium*, the service of the faithful, or of believers. Hence the change from *missa* to *mass*, the latter being only a slight modification of the former word.

Protestants have uniformly rejected this term with abhorrence, because of the abuses which, under this name, have been connected with the sacrament, both in ancient and modern times, while they have protested against the charge of a want of regard for the real *missa* or *mass* of the primitive church.

On the subject of the mass, the reader is referred to various authorities in the index.<sup>9</sup>

17. *Sacramentum altaris*, sacrament of the altar. This phrase is used in common by the Greek, Roman, and Lutheran churches. But the reformed churches reject the phrase, because of their aversion to the word *altar*.

But, without the addition of the word *altar*, that of *sacrament* alone has, very generally, been used to denote the ordinance in question, this being the principal rite of religious worship; and, by way of emphasis, denominated *the sacrament*.

18. Besides the foregoing appellations in common use, and having a peculiar signification, there are many others of less frequent occurrence, and more general character, the knowledge of which may be of importance as conveying ideas respecting the nature, significancy, dignity, and efficacy of the ordinance which they describe.

The most of these are derived from relations of the bread and the wine, the body and blood of Christ. In this point of view the holy sacrament is represented as *spiritual nourishment, the life and strength of the soul*, etc. The terms *body* and *blood, food* and *drink, bread* and *wine*, were at first used in the same sense. Afterward, in consequence of the prevailing custom of administering only one element, these terms were separated, and the ordinance was denoted by the appellations of *body, food*, and *bread*, alone; the terms *blood, drink, wine*, etc. being rarely added. The following are some of the expressions in question:—

1. *Corpus Christi*, the body of Christ.
2. *Cibus Dei, s. Domini*, the food of God, or of the Lord.
3. *Cibus cælestis*, heavenly food.
4. *Cibus angelorum*, angels' food.
5. *Cibus viatorum, mortalium, ægrotorum*, food of travellers, mortals, the sick, etc.
6. *Manna cælestis*, heavenly manna.



7. *Panis supersubstantialis*, equivalent to living bread, or bread indeed. The expression "our daily bread," in our Lord's prayer, was applied to the consecrated bread.

8. *Panis Dei, s. Domini*, bread of God.

9. *Panis vitæ*, bread of life.

10. *Panis cælestis*, heavenly bread.

11. Ἐφόδιον, *viaticum*, provisions for a journey. It was an ancient custom to administer the sacrament to the sick in the last stages of life, and also to put the sacred elements in the coffin of the deceased. Hence the appellation above. Death was, to the ancient Christian, a journey from this to the eternal world, and the sacrament furnished the needful provisions for that journey. But this custom of administering the sacrament to the dying and the dead was finally abandoned.

12. Μετάληψις, *participation, communion*, i. e. with saints or with Christ, etc.

13. Ἀρράβων, ἀρράβων τῆς μελλούσης ζωῆς, *pledge, pledge of eternal life*. 2 Cor. i. 22; v. 6; and Eph. i. 14.

14. Φάρμακον ἀθανασίας, ἀντίδοτος τοῦ μὴ ἀποθανεῖν, *medicamentum, medicina corporis et mentis, purgatorium, amuletum*, and other phrases, expressive of medicinal properties for the soul.

15. *Sacramentum pacis*, the reconciling ordinance, a favourite expression of Chrysostom.

16. The terms applied to baptism were often transferred to the Lord's supper, such as ἱερουργία, μυστήριον, already mentioned; τὸ φῶς, ἡ ζωὴ, ἡ σωτηρία, ἡ ἐλπίς, ὁ καθαρισμὸς, ἡ ὑπόδεσις τῆς παρρησίας, *light, life, salvation, hope, purification, access to the Father by Christ, with assurance of adoption*.\*

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\* The following sentence in *Costeri Institut. Chr.* lib. i. c. vi., consists of extracts from various writers, chiefly from Bernhard of Clairvaux:—Eucharistia est medicina ægrotis, perigrinantibus via; debiles confortat, valentes delectat, languorem sanat, sanitatem servat; fit homo mansuetior ad correctionem, potentior ad laborem, ardentior ad amorem, sagacior ad cautelam, ad obedientiam promptior, ad gratiarum cautiones devotior; hic dimittuntur peccata quotidiana, expelluntur potestates Satanæ, dantur vires ad ipsum etiam martyrium subeundum; minuitur in minimis peccatis sensus, in gravioribus tollitur omnino consensus, denique afferuntur omnia bona; quia homo communicans in id transit, quod sumit.—The following expressions are from the language of the Council of Trent, (*Conc. Trident.* sess. xiii. p. 77–86, ed. Lugd. 1677–8):—Eucharistia est symbolum unitatis et caritatis, qua Christus omnes Christianos inter se conjunctos et copulatos esse voluit.—Symbolum rei sacræ, et invisibilis gratiæ forma visibilis.—Spiritualis animarum cibus.—Panis angelorum.—Animæ vita, perpetua sanitas mentis.—Antidotum liberans a culpis et peccatis.—Pignus futuræ gloriæ.



The holy sacrament, from the eleventh century, became the ordeal for proving the guilt or innocence of persons suspected or accused of crimes; and, throughout the nations of Europe, was also employed as the means of ratifying an oath, asseveration, or execration. The names of the holy sacrament are familiar in the dialect of the profane in every language. Even a celebrated Christian queen, in her paroxysms of rage, was accustomed to swear by the blood of God!

## § 2. OF THE SCRIPTURAL ACCOUNT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.<sup>1</sup>

THE evangelists who record the institution of the Lord's supper give it no peculiar name or title. St. Paul, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, styles it *the Lord's supper*, *the table of the Lord*, and *the communion*, xi. 20; x. 21; x. 16. No other distinctive appellation appears to have been given to it in the Scriptures.

Our Saviour instituted this ordinance in connection with the passover, and authorized his disciples to celebrate it in this connection. But it was evidently observed as a separate and independent ordinance in the times of the apostles and with their sanction. The apostle Paul, in 1 Cor. xi., makes no mention of the Passover, but speaks of the communion as a customary rite: "*As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show the Lord's death until he come.*"

This sacrament, however, was probably celebrated annually in connection with the passover by the converts from the Jews, who, as appears from Epiphanius,<sup>2</sup> continued for many years to observe this Jewish festival; and, even in the Christian church generally, it was celebrated with peculiar solemnity at the festival of Easter, which corresponded to this passover.

From the circumstance that it was instituted as a separate and distinct ordinance, though in connection with the passover, appears to have been derived the custom of celebrating it, not as a separate and independent religious ordinance, but as one of the common rites of public worship, and as the conclusion of the service.

It may appear, at first thought, singular that John, the beloved disciple, the bosom friend of our Lord, who with Peter made ready the passover, entirely omits to mention the Lord's supper. It should, however, be recollected that John's gospel was evidently intended to be supplementary to the others, and that his own narrative clearly shows that it was intentionally omitted, because al-

ready sufficiently explained. "Is it possible to pass over such an affecting and important event with more evident appearance of design? Could he more distinctly signify that he regarded it as already sufficiently reported, and left on imperishable record?"<sup>3</sup>

The account given by St. Paul is of special importance to us; for it not only harmonizes with the narrations of the apostles and confirms them, but it shows that the Lord's supper is an established ordinance in the church, and designed for perpetual observance. He severely rebukes the disorders and abuses which the Corinthians had introduced, relates the original institution in conformity with the narrative given by Luke, and assures them that he shall set the whole in order when he comes.

The question has been raised whether Christ himself partook of the sacrament? To this the narrative offers no satisfactory reply. The opinions of the church have been greatly divided on this point. Chrysostom<sup>4</sup> and Augustin<sup>5</sup> maintain the affirmative. This opinion is rendered highly probable from the circumstance that he carefully observed all the Mosaic ordinances, and received baptism at the hands of John, because thus it became him to fulfil all righteousness. In conformity with the same spirit, it is hardly credible that he would have omitted a rite so significant as the one under consideration. The advocates of the doctrine of transubstantiation strenuously maintain the contrary opinion.

Another inquiry, which has divided the opinions of ecclesiastical writers, has been raised respecting the presence of Judas the traitor. Did he partake of the sacrament? The Apostolical Constitutions affirm that he was not present at the celebration of the Lord's supper. The advocates of this opinion rely chiefly on John xiii. 30: "He then, having received the sop, went immediately out." They of the contrary opinion appeal to Luke xxii. 14-21: "And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the *twelve apostles* with him." In delivering the cup, our Lord said also, "Drink ye *all* of it." The prevailing sentiment in the church has been that the traitor did partake of the sacred elements in company with the other disciples.<sup>6</sup>

The bread used on this occasion was doubtless the *unleavened* bread which was provided for the passover. No stress, however, is laid on the nature or kind of bread; but on the *breaking* of the bread, *in token of the body of Christ broken for us*.

The wine was, with equal probability, the common wine of the country, of a dark red colour, and was received without mixture with

water. The significancy of the distribution of the cup, however, consisted not in the *quality* or *colour* of the wine, but in its being *poured out* in token of the *blood of Christ shed for the remission of sins*.

The eucharist appears to have been celebrated at first in the evening, with reference, no doubt, to the time of its original institution. But no directions are given on this head. See 1 Cor. x. 23; Acts xx. vii.

### § 3. OF THE TESTIMONY OF PAGAN WRITERS.

NOTWITHSTANDING all the care of the primitive Christians to conceal this sacred ordinance from their enemies, it was known, and the celebration of it was prohibited<sup>1</sup> by Roman magistrates, as appears from Pliny's letter. Lucian of Samosata speaks of our Lord as the great magician *who instituted new mysteries*. Celsus, with reference to this sacred festival, as appears from Origen, also severely censures the Christians against whom he wrote,<sup>2</sup> for holding certain secret assemblies and celebrating unauthorized rites. The frequent charges alleged against them of sensuality and incest, of offering human sacrifices and of celebrating horrible orgies in secret, evidently relate to the same ordinance. See references<sup>3</sup> for a fuller view of this subject.

### § 4. OF THE TESTIMONY OF THE APOSTOLICAL FATHERS.

NEITHER Barnabas, nor Polycarp, nor Clement of Rome, make any mention of the Lord's supper. This omission is the more remarkable in the latter, inasmuch as he wrote a long epistle to the Corinthians, whom the apostle so severely censures for their abuse of this ordinance. Ignatius, whose authority is of no value, is the only one of the apostolical fathers whose writings have any reference to the subject before us; but these passages from his epistles, even if their genuineness be admitted, are of little importance. In his epistle to the Ephesians, c. iv., he speaks of the breaking of one bread, the medicine of immortality. In his epistle to the Philadelphians, c. v., with evident allusion to Eph. iv. 2-7, he speaks of one faith, one preaching, one *eucharist*—one *loaf*, or *bread*, broken for all. There is another passage, in his epistle to the Smyrneans, c. viii., which is of a more doubtful authority than either of the foregoing, and which is evidently an interpolation from the Apostolical Constitutions, lib. ii. c. 26, 27.

It is even more remarkable that most of the early apologists for Christianity, such as Minucius Felix, Athenagoras, Tatian, Theophilus of Antioch, and Arnobius, do not make any mention of the sacrament, the most sacred ordinance of the Christian religion. Justin Martyr, happily for us, has given two descriptions of this ordinance, in nearly the same words, *Apol. i. c. 61-67*, the one probably relating to the celebration immediately after baptism—the other, to the ordinary administration of the sacrament, on the Lord's day, in connection with the agapæ. "On Sunday we all assemble in one place," he says again, "both those who live in the city and they who dwell in the country, and the writings of apostles and prophets are read so long as the time permits. After the reading, the president of the assembly makes an address, in which he recapitulates the glorious things that have been read, and exhorts the people to follow them. Then we all stand up together and pray. After prayer, bread, wine, and water are brought in. The president of the meeting again prays according to his ability, and gives thanks, to which the people respond, Amen. After this, the bread, wine, and water are distributed to those present, and the deacons carry portions to such as are necessarily detained from the meeting. Those who are able and willing contribute what they please in money, which is given to the president of the meeting, and is appropriated to the support of widows and orphans, the sick, the poor, and whomsoever is necessitous." In the other account, the bread is brought to the president of the brethren, and a cup of water and a mixture, *i. e.* of wine mingled with water, which he takes and gives thanks at length that we are permitted to partake of these things. To which all at the conclusion respond, Amen. The bread, wine, and water, are then distributed as before.

It appears from an examination of both passages, that the consecration of the elements was made in the name of the three persons of the Godhead. He speaks of a "thanksgiving to the Father of the universe, through or in the name of his Son, and the Holy Ghost."

The dialogue with Trypho the Jew, usually ascribed to Justin, speaks of the "offering of the bread of thanksgiving, and of the cup of thanksgiving;" and of the "eucharistic meal of bread and wine;" of the "dry and liquid food with which Christians commemorate the sufferings once endured by the Son of God;" but gives no additional information respecting the celebration of the ordinance.



Irenæus, in his controversial writings, brought into use the words *προσφορά*, and *δυσία*, which Justin Martyr had introduced; his writings, however, are chiefly of a controversial character, and accordingly have little reference to the ritual of the church: he contends that the eucharist should be regarded as a *sacrifice*, in opposition to the Gnostics, who contended that all sacrifices had ceased. Irenæus, however, distinguished this from the Jewish sacrifices, as of a higher and nobler character;<sup>1</sup> he appears to have some idea of the symbolical presence in the elements; the bread is exchanged into bread of a higher order, the earthly into the heavenly, but is still bread.<sup>2</sup>

Clement of Alexandria and Origen offer much important matter in regard to the *doctrine* of the eucharist, but very little relating to the rites of its celebration. The former speaks of the twofold nature of the blood of Christ, *corporeal* and *spiritual*, as typified in the mixing of the wine with water.<sup>3</sup> The latter is the first to commend the reverential custom of the church, which is still superstitiously observed by the Roman Catholics, in guarding every particle of the consecrated bread from falling to the ground. "You who frequent our sacred mysteries know that when you receive the body of the Lord, you take care with all due caution and veneration that not even the smallest particle of the consecrated gift should fall to the ground and be wasted. If, through inattention, any part thus fall, you justly account yourselves guilty. If then, with good reason, you use so much caution in preserving his body, how can you esteem it a lighter sin to slight the word of God than to neglect his body?"<sup>4</sup>

From Tertullian we learn that this ordinance was celebrated before daylight in the morning, "*antelucanis coetibus*," and received only at the hands of the presiding minister, "*nec de aliorum manu quam præsidentium sumimus*." He also intimates that the sacred elements were strictly guarded from waste and accident; but expressly declares that all these usages are observed from tradition and the force of custom, without any scriptural authority whatever.<sup>5</sup>

Cyprian treats at length of the types of the Lord's supper in the Old Testament, and of the elements; and censures severely the practice of administering *water* instead of wine. Certain sects at that time maintained that the use of wine, even at the sacrament, was sinful. It further appears from his writings, that the eucharist was administered *daily*—that it was offered to children, and, on one occasion, was administered by a female enthusiast—that the sacred



elements were sent to the absent communicants—and that the consecrated bread was carried home by the communicants from the table of the Lord, on account of the efficacy which was ascribed to the consecrated elements. According to the same author, they also received the sacred elements in communion from the officiating minister into their own hands.<sup>6</sup>

But the fullest information in our possession respecting the point under consideration is derived from the Apostolical Constitutions. This forgery, the object of which is to establish the idea of an universal catholic church and a Levitical priesthood, and thus to exalt the bishop, represents the state of the church in the latter part of the fourth and beginning of the fifth century. The hierarchy was now established, and the superstitions and perversions of the ancient ritual were in current use. It is the oldest liturgical document now extant in the church, and is evidently the basis of the formularies and liturgies, both of the Eastern and Western churches.<sup>7</sup> Brief descriptions of the eucharist, and of the *agapæ*, are found in different parts of this work,<sup>8</sup> and full descriptions of the liturgies and formularies connected with this service;<sup>9</sup> from which the following particulars are collected:—

(a) The *agapæ* are distinguished from the eucharist.

(b) The ordinance was celebrated with profound secrecy as a sacred mystery; catechumens, penitents, and unbelievers of every description, being excluded with the greatest caution, and the doors carefully guarded.

All believers in good and regular standing were expected to partake of the elements.

(c) The sexes were separated, and received the elements separately.

(d) The ordinance appears to have been administered at the usual time of public worship, in the morning, and in the ordinary place of assembly. No intimation is given of a celebration by night.

(e) The consecration of the elements was performed by the chief priest, ἀρχιερεύς: this term is sometimes used as synonymous with that of bishop; and yet they who do not admit the identity of presbyters and bishops, and of teaching and ruling bishops, must still concede that the presbyters were permitted, at times, to consecrate the elements, especially in the absence of the bishop.

(f) The consecrating minister offered a prayer in his own behalf, as well as more general petitions; and then distributed the bread himself. The cup was distributed by the deacons. At first it

would appear that both of the elements were distributed by the deacons; such is the distinct assertion of Justin Martyr.

(g) Mention is made of a splendid robe for the minister, and of his making the sign of the cross upon his forehead.

(h) The elements were presented simply in these words: "The body of Christ; the blood of Christ, the cup of life;" to which the communicant simply responded, "Amen!" The brevity of this form is strikingly contrasted with the prolonged prayers and formalities of the other parts of this service.

(i) During the service, the 34th Psalm was sung. The 42d and 139th came into use at a later period. The attention of the assembly was called for with the usual form, *ἀνω τὸν νοῦν, ἔχομεν πρὸς τὸν κύριον*—*sursum corda, habemus ad Dominum*.

(k) The three elements, bread, wine, and water, are mentioned; the two last being mixed in the same vessel. The bread was *broken* for distribution, and the fragments carefully preserved.

(l) The communicants were required sometimes to stand erect; and sometimes to kneel, and with the head inclining forward to receive the blessing. They were directed to rise and stand in prayer after partaking of the elements, and then to kneel to receive the benediction.

### § 5. OF THE TIMES OF CELEBRATION.

UNDER this head two points of inquiry arise: 1. At what hour or part of the day? 2. How often, and on what particular occasions was the Lord's supper celebrated? In regard to these particulars, there appears to have been no uniformity of practice or harmony of views in the primitive church. A brief summary of the usages of the church at different times is however given below.

1. *The time of day*.—This solemnity was originally instituted in the evening or at night, Matt. xxvi. 20; 1 Cor. xi. 23; and on some occasions was celebrated by night by the apostles; and probably at other times of the day also. Acts ii. 46; xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 2.

Nothing definite can be determined from Justin Martyr respecting the time of day set apart for celebrating the sacrament.

At a later period, mention is made by Ambrose<sup>1</sup> and Augustin<sup>2</sup> of the celebration of it by night on certain occasions, and as an exception to the general rule. It was afterward administered in the *morning*, even on the occasions mentioned by them.

Tertullian speaks of the celebration of it on *Easter-eve*.<sup>3</sup> This,

in the fourth and fifth centuries, was the most solemn period for the celebration both of baptism and of the Lord's supper; and was observed as such even in the ninth century.<sup>4</sup> In the eleventh and twelfth centuries it was transferred to the evening, and then to the afternoon of the day before Easter, and afterward to the morning of the same day.

The celebration on Christmas-eve continued until a late period. To this ancient custom of celebrating the eucharist by night is, perhaps, to be traced that of burning lighted tapers on such occasions<sup>5</sup>—at a later period, emblematical of spiritual illumination and of rejoicing.

The Roman laws forbade assemblies by night, even for religious worship. For this reason, probably, the early Christians selected the last hours of the night, toward morning, for holding their religious meetings. This was neither a forbidden nor a suspicious hour, and yet it was sufficient to satisfy their views of the necessity of celebrating the eucharist by night. Other reasons were afterward sought out, drawn from scriptural representations of Christ, as the Sun of righteousness, Dayspring from on high, Light of the world, etc. Nine o'clock in the morning became the canonical hour as early as the fifth century. And it was settled that the sacrament should be celebrated on Sundays and high festivals at this hour, and at twelve o'clock on other occasions.

2. *Times and Seasons.*—The Lord's supper was originally celebrated daily in connection with a common meal by the disciples. Acts ii. 42, 46; 1 Cor. x. 11. In the beginning of the second century, as we learn from Pliny's letter, the weekly celebration of this ordinance on a "stated day" was customary. This day is believed to have been the Christian sabbath, the Lord's day. The same was the custom fifty years later, as we are distinctly informed by Justin Martyr. The observance of the day may be clearly shown from Tertullian.<sup>6</sup> Justin Martyr says, "We all meet together on Sunday;" and the reason assigned is, that this is the first day of the week, when in the beginning light was created, and when also our Lord Jesus Christ arose from the dead.<sup>7</sup> It was called also *dies panis*—the day of bread, with evident allusion to the celebration of the sacrament on that day. Socrates relates<sup>8</sup> that it was celebrated every Sunday in almost all the churches throughout the world, except at Alexandria and at Rome.

There is also evidence that the custom of daily communion continued to be more or less observed to the third or fourth century,

though some of the passages cited in proof may relate to the custom of private communion, for which purpose the consecrated bread was retained at home after the consecration by the priest became an important rite.

After the establishment of the hierarchy, this sacrament was administered on several of the festivals of the church, and was mingled with so many rites that its original significancy and importance was in a great measure overlooked. In the Greek church especially, it fell in a great measure into neglect, except on the great festivals of the church. Such was the complaint of Chrysostom at the close of the fourth century. Augustin, his cotemporary in the Western church, informs us that there was no uniform usage in the celebration of this sacrament. Some partook of it daily; others on stated days. Some on the Lord's day only; others on this and the Jewish sabbath. He also advises that each should conform to the usage of the church where he may chance to reside.\*

The weekly celebration of the sacrament was strongly recommended at the Reformation, but the custom of the reformed churches in this respect is very various.

#### § 6. OF THE PLACE OF CELEBRATION.

THE sacrament was instituted in a private house, and the "breaking of bread" by the apostles, Acts ii. 46, xx. 7, 8, was in the private houses of believers. But the Corinthians, it appears, had a place distinct from their own houses, set apart for the celebration of this rite and of public worship. 1 Cor. xi. 20.

In times of persecution, the Lord's supper was administered wherever it could be done with secrecy and safety, in secret places, in dens and caves of the earth, in the wilderness and desert fields, etc. But it was a rule from the beginning that, as far as practicable, this ordinance should be solemnized in the public assembly, and in the customary place of public worship. The consecration of the elements, especially, was at times regarded as an act to be performed only in public; as appears from the custom of sending the consecrated elements to the sick, and to the poor or infirm who might be absent. The consecration in private houses was expressly forbidden by the Council of Laodicea.<sup>1</sup>

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\* Indifferentes est habendum, et pro eorum, inter quos vivitur, societate servandum est.—*Epist. ad Janar.* 113, c. ii.

The communion table was common as early as the second century. It was first a simple table, around which the communicants gathered, without distinction of age or sex, to receive the sacred elements. It was afterward styled *an altar*, *δυσιαστήριον*, etc. This, styled *δυσιαστήριον*, was at first made of wood, hence the expression *ἡ σωτηρία τοῦ ξύλου*. Altars wrought from stone became common in the time of Constantine, and in the Western church were required by ecclesiastical authority in the beginning of the sixth century.<sup>2</sup>

The custom of covering the altar with white linen was very ancient. Optatus, † A. D. 384, is the first writer who expressly mentions this practice.<sup>3</sup> Allusions are also made to it by several other authors.<sup>4</sup>

Under the ceremonials of liturgical worship, the altar was enclosed in the chancel, from which the laity were carefully excluded. Here the bishop first received the elements, then the several orders of the priesthood. After this they were distributed to the laity without. Even the emperors were sometimes required to communicate without the chancel. "The priests alone," said Ambrose to the Emperor Theodosius, "are permitted to enter within the palisades of the altar. All others must not approach it. Retire then, and remain with the rest of the laity. A purple robe makes emperors, but not priests."<sup>5</sup>

#### § 7. OF THE MINISTERS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

As in baptism, so in the administration of this ordinance, a deviation from the general rule in cases of necessity was authorized by common consent. The following remarks must be regarded as exhibiting only the prevailing principles and usages in relation to this subject, without regard to the occasional exceptions and minor points of controversy.

Nothing is said in the New Testament respecting the person whose prerogative it is to administer this sacrament. Our Lord himself administered it at the time of its institution; and the probability is that the apostles afterward performed the same office, but it does not appear that this service was restricted exclusively to them. Acts xx. 7; ii. 42, 46; 1 Cor. x. 14 *et seq.*; xi. 23 *et seq.*

According to the earliest documents of the second and third centuries, it was the appropriate office of the president of the assembly to administer the eucharist. Justin Martyr's account of this rite



is, that the president, ὁ προεστώς τῶν ἀδελφῶν, pronounced the form of prayer and praise over the elements, and the deacons distributed them among the communicants who were present, and conveyed them to such as were absent.<sup>1</sup> According to Ignatius, the ordinance could not be administered without the presence of the bishop.<sup>2</sup> In the Apostolical Constitutions, the administration of this ordinance is ascribed, at one time, to the chief priest, ἀρχιερεὺς; at another, to the bishop, ἐπίσκοπος.<sup>3</sup> He is directed to stand before the altar with the presbyters and deacons, and to perform the office of consecration. The same is required by Cyril of Jerusalem and by Dionysius.<sup>4</sup>

It was a rule, of long continuance, that a presbyter should not consecrate the elements in the presence of the bishop. In the presence of several bishops this service devolved upon the senior officer, or upon some one specially designated for this purpose.

This was also the duty of the bishop during the seventh and eighth centuries. But in the Middle Ages the bishops seldom officiated at this service. Their neglect of this duty is ascribable, perhaps, to their increasing cares and duties, and the extent of their dioceses; but especially to the pride of office, which did not comport with the discharge of the ordinary duties of religion—an opinion that presents a striking contrast to the pious zeal of the bishops of the earlier centuries, in presiding and officiating at the table of the Lord.<sup>5</sup>

In general it was a rule of the church that the bishop consecrated the elements, assisted sometimes by the presbyter.<sup>6</sup> Such a reservation in favour of the bishop gave importance to that office, and a mysterious efficacy to the act of consecration, for which there is no authority either in the writings of the apostles or the earliest usage of the church. By this act a mysterious virtue was said to be imparted to the elements. In time they were supposed to become the body and blood of Christ. To these views it is easy to refer the worship of the host in the Catholic church.

In this connection, the following summary of the doctrines of the church relative to this subject may be of interest:—

“During the first six centuries, the doctrine concerning the elements of the Lord's supper, or the relation of the signs to the things signified, was stated by ecclesiastical writers in three different ways:—First, the theological position, which appears to have been the prevalent ecclesiastical notion, represented the bread and wine as being closely united to the body and blood of Christ—and as it

were, penetrated or saturated with the sacred substance. This idea is found in the writings of Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Hilary of Poitiers, Didymus of Alexandria, Cyril of Jerusalem, Gregory of Nyssa, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, Theodoret. Secondly, some regarded the bread and wine as mere signs or symbols, supposing, however, at the same time, that the body and blood of Christ stood in some sacred and supernatural relation to them. The patrons of this opinion (sometimes with approximation to the former) were Tertullian, Cyprian, Athanasius, and Augustin. Thirdly, others maintained that the signs and things signified were entirely distinct; but they held that a supernatural sanctifying efficacy attended the whole celebration of the rite. The writers who adopted this view (sometimes with a leaning to the second opinion) were Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Eusebius of Cæsarea, and Gregory Nazianzen.

“No traces of the later doctrine of transubstantiation are discoverable in any of these writers, except perhaps Gregory of Nyssa.”

“As early as the seventh century, and especially during the eighth and ninth, the fictitious doctrine of a miraculous, and as it were magical, change of *the elements* of the Lord's supper into *the body and blood of Christ*, began to gain ground. This change, it was supposed, was made secretly, for the exercise of faith; and therefore the transmuted elements existed under the appearance (colour, flavour, etc.) of bread and wine, (*sub specie panis et vini*.) This doctrine was not established in the West without opposition and controversy; but it gained footing in the Greek church more quietly, during the eighth century. It was not distinguished by its modern name (transubstantiation) before the twelfth century.

“About this time the use of unleavened bread in the eucharist was introduced in the West.”<sup>7</sup>

The presbyter distributed the bread, and the deacon presented the cup.<sup>8</sup> In the absence of the bishop, the service of the consecration was performed by the presbyter, and both elements were distributed by the deacons. In the performance of this service the deacons acted simply as the assistants of the bishop or presbyter. They, however, not unfrequently assumed the prerogative even of consecrating the elements; but this practice was expressly forbidden by repeated acts of ecclesiastical councils.<sup>9</sup>

It early became a custom, in the primitive church, for the minister to prepare himself for his solemn office at the table of the Lord by appropriate religious duties. Confession and private prayer

were afterward required.<sup>10</sup> Fasting and abstinence from sensual indulgences were likewise enjoined.\* It was also an ancient custom for the clergy to wash their hands before administering the elements.<sup>11</sup>

### § 8. OF THE COMMUNICANTS.

UNDER this head three things require particular notice: 1. The persons who were admitted to the communion of the Lord's supper. 2. Their preparation for this ordinance. 3. Their deportment in the participation of it.

1. *Persons admitted to the holy communion.*—It appears from the Apostolical Constitutions,<sup>1</sup> that, after the doors had been carefully closed and a guard set, the deacon made a public proclamation of the different classes of persons who were not permitted to be present on the occasion. These were the first and second classes of catechumens, the *κατηχούμενοι* and *ἀρροούμενοι*—the unbelievers, Jews, and pagans, and reputed heretics and separatists of every description. The penitents and energumens are not here mentioned, but it appears from other sources that they were not permitted to be present at the Lord's table. None indeed but believers in full communion with the church were permitted to be present. All such, originally, partook of the sacrament. Neither in the New Testament, nor by Justin Martyr, Irenæus, or any of the earliest Christian writers, is any intimation given of a selection of communicants. According to Justin, the sacred elements were even sent by the hands of the deacons to absent members of the church, who might be sick, or otherwise prevented from coming to the table of the Lord. According to the rule of St. Ambrose, *omnes Christiani, omni dominica, debent offerre*, "all Christians ought, on every Lord's day, to partake of the Lord's supper." Such as came to church without receiving the sacrament, are repeatedly threatened with excommunication for this irregularity.<sup>2</sup> But such cases of absence must have become customary in the fourth and fifth cen-

\* Sacerdos Syrus eam noctem, quæ liturgiam præcedet, vigilando in ecclesia, aut secretario ducit insomnem, orationibus et sacræ lectioni vacans, ne per somnium ludibrio aliquo contaminetur. Si uxorem habet, abstinere ab illa debet per dies aliquot; jejunasse etiam præcedente vespera, et saltem vino et omni liquore, quo caput tentari potest, abstinuisse. Similem consuetudinem in ecclesia per noctandi antequam liturgia celebratur vigere apud Nestorianos. Mesopotamanos testati sunt, qui Bagdado sæpe huc venerunt sacerdotes.—*Renaudot. Lit. Orient.* t. p. 49.

turies, as appears from the severity with which this delinquency is rebuked by Chrysostom<sup>3</sup> and others.

In the sixth century, persons of this description, who did not wish to receive the sacrament, withdrew before the solemnity began, but not until they had received the blessing of the minister.<sup>4</sup> This was virtually sanctioning the custom of absenting one's self from the communion, and gave rise to the distinction among the members of the church, of *communicants* and *non-communicants*, a distinction unknown in the primitive church.

From this it afterward became customary for the presbyters to keep consecrated bread, called *eulogia*, to offer to such persons as chose to partake of it instead of uniting in regular communion with the church. To this substitute for full communion it is easy to refer the origin of *private masses*, and of communion *in one kind*. This perversion of the ordinance became common in the thirteenth century. To the same origin may, perhaps, be traced the idea of a halfway covenant, which has at times prevailed in the church. They that received the *eulogia* in the place of the sacrament were called *halfway communicants*.

But agreeably to all the laws and customs of the church, baptism constituted membership with the church. All baptized persons were legitimately numbered among the communicants, as members of the church. Accordingly the sacrament immediately followed the ordinance of baptism, that the members thus received might come at once into the enjoyment of all the rights and privileges of Christian fellowship. But in all these instances the baptized person is of necessity supposed to have been of adult age, capable of exercising faith, according to the injunction, "Believe and be baptized."

After the general introduction of infant baptism, in the second and third centuries, the sacrament continued to be administered to all who had been baptized, whether infants or adults. The reason assigned by Cyprian and others for this practice was "that age was no impediment; that the grace of God, bestowed upon the subjects of baptism, was given without measure and without any limitation as to age."<sup>5</sup> Augustin strongly advocates this practice,<sup>6</sup> and for authority appeals to John vi. 53: *Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.*

The custom of infant communion continued for several centuries. It is mentioned in the third Council of Tours, A. D. 813, and even the Council of Trent, A. D. 1545, only decreed that it should not be

considered essential to salvation. It is still scrupulously observed by the Greek church.<sup>7</sup>

It was the custom of the church, at different times and in various places, to administer the sacrament even to the dead, and also to bury some of the consecrated elements with the dead. These superstitions were the natural result of the mysterious powers ascribed to the consecration of the elements. But the latter custom seems not to have prevailed to any considerable degree, and the former was severely condemned.<sup>8</sup> The consecrated elements were frequently conveyed to such as were sick or in prison; but they were seldom consecrated in a private house.<sup>9</sup>

2. *Preparation of the Communicants.*—The several preliminary rites of baptism which have been already detailed were regarded as a due preparation both for that ordinance, and for the sacrament which immediately followed. But, for every subsequent return to the table of the Lord, a special and solemn preparation was required of each communicant. The ordinance was regarded with the deepest religious awe, which none could duly approach without self-examination, and a tender Christian spirit, coupled with a holy life.

The following rites especially, were observed preparatory to the communion of the Lord's supper.

1. *Self-examination, and confession of sin before God, as taught in 1 Cor. xi. 28,* together with many prayers.

2. *Absolution*, or a removal of ecclesiastical censures and penalties. No one who was the subject of discipline could come to the Lord's supper until he had first been restored to full and regular standing with the church.

3. *Fasting, humiliation, and abstinence from sensual pleasures*, in much the same manner as was required of the officiating minister.<sup>10</sup> (See page 430.)

4. *The communicants wore a peculiar apparel suited to the occasion.* This was probably white raiment similar to that which was put on after baptism, though no specific law was given on this subject. The women wore a vail, usually white, called *dominicale*.<sup>11</sup>

5. *Communicants of both sexes were accustomed to wash their hands*, previously to receiving the sacred elements. This was not a ceremonial purification, but a rite dictated by a sense of propriety, *quiddam secundum se conveniens*.<sup>12</sup>

The following extracts from Chrysostom are given to exhibit the



elevated sentiments of piety which according to that venerable father should pervade our breasts at the table of the Lord:—

“When thou sittest down to a common table, remember that spiritual table, and call to mind that supper of the Lord. Consider what words thy mouth hath spoken, words worthy of such a table, what things thy mouth hath touched or tasted, what meat it has fed upon. Dost thou think it no harm with that mouth to speak evil of and revile thy brother? How canst thou call him brother? If he is not thy brother, how couldst thou say ‘Our Father?’—for that implies more persons than one. Consider with whom thou stoodest in the time of the holy mysteries; with cherubim and seraphim. But the cherubims use no reviling. Their mouth is filled with one office, glorifying and praising God. How then canst thou say with them, ‘Holy, Holy, Holy,’ who usest thy mouth to reviling? Tell me, if there was a royal vessel, always filled with royal dainties, and set apart only for this use, and one of the servants should use it for mean purposes, would he afterward dare to place it, filled with that which is vile and refuse, among the other vessels appointed for royal use? No, certainly. Yet this is the very case of railing and reviling. You say at the holy table, ‘Our Father,’ and then immediately add, ‘which art in heaven.’ This word raises you up, and gives wings to your soul, and shows that you have a Father in heaven. Therefore do nothing, speak nothing, of earthly things. He hath placed you in the order of spirits above, and appointed you a station in that choir. Why then do you draw yourself downward? You stand by the royal throne, and do you revile your brother? How are you not afraid lest the King should take it as an affront offered to himself? If a servant beats or reviles another in our presence, who are but his fellow-servants, though he does it justly, we rebuke him for it. And dare you stand before the Royal throne and revile your brother? See you not these holy vessels? Are they not always appropriated to one peculiar use? Dares any one put them to any other? But you are more holy than these vessels, yea, much more holy. Why then do you pollute and defile yourself? You stand in heaven, and do you still use railing? You converse with angels, and do you yet revile? You are admitted to the Lord’s holy kiss, and do you yet revile? God hath honoured and adorned your mouth so many ways, by angelical hymns, by food, not angelical, but super-angelical, by his own kisses, and by his own embraces, and do you after all these revile? Do not, I beseech you. Let that which is the cause of so many evils be far

from the soul of a Christian.”<sup>13</sup> “Be grateful to thy Benefactor by an excellent conversation; consider the greatness of the sacrifice, and let that engage thee to adorn every member of thy body. Consider what thou takest in thy hand, and never after endure to strike any man; do not disgrace that hand by the sin of fighting and quarrelling, which has been honoured with the reception of so great a gift. Consider what thou takest in thy hand, and keep thy hand free from all robbery and injustice. Think again, how thou not only receivest it in thy hand, but puttest it to thy mouth; and keep thy tongue pure from all filthy and contumelious speech, from blasphemy and perjury, and all words of the like nature. For it is a most pernicious thing that the tongue, which ministers in such tremendous mysteries, and is dyed with the purple of such precious blood, and made a golden sword, should be put to the vile practice of railing and reviling, and scurrilous and abusive language. Regard with veneration the honour wherewith God has honoured it; and do not debase it to such mean offices of sin. Consider again, that after thy hand and thy tongue, thy heart receives that tremendous mystery:—then never devise any fraud or deceit against thy neighbour, but keep thy mind pure from all malicious designs. And after the same manner guard thy eyes and thy ears.”<sup>14</sup>

3. *Acts and deportment of the communicants at the Lord's table.*

1. They were required to bring certain oblations or presents of bread and wine. The bread was enveloped in a white linen cloth called *fano*, and the wine was contained in a vessel called *ama* or *amula*. These offerings were brought to the altar after the deacon had said, “Let us pray,” and while the assembly were engaged in singing a charity hymn appropriate to the occasion.<sup>15</sup> The whole ceremony is minutely related in the note below.\* The custom was abolished in the twelfth century.

2. The communicants *stood* during the administration of the sacrament, with their faces toward the east.<sup>16</sup> “*Stantes oramus, quod est signum resurrectionis. Unde etiam omnibus diebus Do-*

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\* Egregium sane remotæ antiquitatis pignus ac vestigium ad hæc usque tempora servatum. Nimirum alit eadem ecclesia decem senes laicos, totidemque anus, quorum munus est, quibusdam solemnibus sacris interesse. *Honesto ac antiquo vestium genere* utuntur, et cum tempus offertorii poscit, ex iis duo mares *fanonibus*, hoc est, mappis candidis involuti accedunt ad gradus presbyterii, et dextra *oblatus*, sinistra *amulas cum vino* tenent, quæ sacerdos illuc ab altari una cum ministris descendens, et duo argentea vasa deaurata deferens suscipit. Idem subinde peragunt et fœminæ duæ anili ætate venerandæ.—*Muratorii Antiq. Ital.* l. iv.

*minicis id ad altare observatur, et hallelujah canitur, quod significat actionem nostram futuram non esse nisi laudare Deum.*"<sup>17</sup>

3. The clergy, according to their ranks respectively, first received the elements; then the men, and lastly the women.<sup>18</sup> They advanced to the table two by two. After the fourth century, none but the clergy were usually permitted to come within the railing and to approach the altar.<sup>19</sup>

4. The communicants received the elements sometimes standing, sometimes kneeling, but never sitting. They took the bread and cup in their hands, and repeated after the minister the sacramental formulary, concluding with a loud "Amen," to signify that they believed themselves to be partakers of the body and blood of Christ.<sup>20</sup> The men received the elements with uncovered hands, previously washed; the women used a part of the dominical as a napkin with which to handle them. From the ninth century, the bread, instead of being delivered into the hands of the communicants, was placed in their mouths, to prevent its being sacrilegiously carried home. This custom is still observed in the Lutheran church. The scrupulous care used to prevent the least morsel from being wasted has been already mentioned. It is worthy of notice, that the Nestorians still exercise the same caution to prevent the waste of any particle of the sacred elements.

At the close of the communion the people all knelt down and received the blessing of the priest,<sup>21</sup> after which he dismissed them, saying, "Depart in peace."

The practice of kneeling during the consecration and distribution of the elements was introduced in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and became general at a period still later.<sup>22</sup>

## § 9. OF THE ELEMENTS.

### (a) *Of the Bread.*

1. *Quality of the bread.*—The question whether *leavened* or *unleavened* bread should be used in the sacrament has been the subject of a spirited dispute between the Greek and Latin churches. The former contended for the use of leavened; the latter, of unleavened bread. Without attempting a protracted discussion of this question, suffice it to say, that no rule was given by our Lord on this subject. It is even uncertain whether he used the unleavened bread of the passover or common bread at the institution of the supper.

The early Christian writers make no mention of the use of unleavened bread in celebrating the Lord's supper. Justin Martyr calls it expressly common bread, κοινὸς ἄρτος.

The bread for the sacrament was supplied from the oblations which the communicants presented at the commencement of the solemnity, and was, probably, the same as that which was in common use.

From the seventh century, the church at Rome used unleavened bread; and the church at Constantinople continued the use of common fermented bread, but the *controversy* between the two churches on the subject originated with Michael Cerularius, patriarch of Constantinople, in the year 1053, and was continued for some time with great bitterness. To this day the one continues the use of leavened, and the other of unleavened bread.

Protestants regard the quality of the bread as of no importance. For the most part they discontinued, at the Reformation, the use of unleavened bread. But the Lutherans still continue it.\*

The elements continued to be supplied by these oblations (voluntary gifts) until the twelfth or thirteenth century. Such as was not needed for sacramental uses was given to the poor. The names

\* Panis sit fermentatus, an azymus; vinum, rubrum an album, nihil refert. Fermentatum et vulgare panem fuisse ante tempus Alexandri Romani Episcopi, narrant historiæ: qui primus azymo pane delectatus est; qua id ratione, non video, nisi ut plebis oculos novo spectaculo in admirationem traheret magis, quam ut animos proba religione institueret. Omnes objuro, qui vel levi aliquo pietatis studio tanguntur, annon evidenter perspiciant, et quanto præclarius Dei gloria hic resplendeat, et quanto affluentior spiritualis consolationis suavitas ad fideles transeat, quam in istis frigidis et histrionicis nugis, quæ nullum alium usum afferunt, nisi ut stupentis populi sensum fallunt.—CALVIN. *Inst. Chr. Rel.* lib. iv. c. xvii. § 43. Panis azymus ne sit an fermentatus, non magnopere putamus laborandum.—BEZA, *Ep. 12, ad Anglic. Eccl. Patres*. Odiosa excitata est contentio super materia cœnæ dominicæ, contententibus his, pane azymo, aliis vero fermentato esse utendum. Atqui apud veteres quondam de his nullæ movebantur rixæ. Nam ecclesiæ pro libertate sua utebantur utroque. Videtur quidem Dominus in prima illa cœna usus esse pane azymo, in mensa ex veteri more celebrandi Paschatis relicto, unde non paucæ ecclesiæ infermentato pane usæ sunt, quæ tamen fermentato pane utentes, non damnabant hæreseos.—BULLINGER. *ap. Gerhard. Loc. Theol.* x. Fermentati æque ac azymi panis in eucharistia liber usus est, dum modo ne alteruter ceu necessarius et nullo casu mutabilis præscribatur. Uterque analogiam quandam fundit: ille nutritionis plenioris; hic sinceritatis et sanctitatis, ad quam eucharistia obligat, majoris. Nostræ ecclesiæ usum azymi a Zuinglio, externorum ejusmodi plane incurioso et interiorum atque spiritualium tenacissimo, retentum, ceu fractioni et distributioni opportuniorem, ut mutarent, hactenus induci non potuerunt, novandi periculum metuentes.—HEIDEGGER. *Corp. Theol. Christ. Loc.* xxv. § 78.

of the donors were publicly rehearsed, and prayers for them invited. These offerings were in time perverted to enrich the clergy; one moiety being distributed to the subordinate orders, and the other to the bishop, who also had the disposal of such as was given in the parish churches.\*

2. *Form of the bread.*—Until we pass the period which appropriately belongs to the period contemplated in this work, the bread of the eucharist was selected from the offerings of the communicants, without regard to any peculiar form. But Catholic superstition has raised many idle questions respecting the form and consistency of the bread, the mingling of oil, of salt, and of cheese, the image to be imprinted upon it, the inscription, &c., which it were foreign to our purpose to relate.

The eucharistic bread in the church of Rome is styled the *host*, *hostia*. It consists of cakes, of meal and water, made small, circular, and thin, like wafers, by which name it is frequently called. These wafers have been known by various names, as *panes eucharistici*, *sacramentales*, *orbiculares*, *tesselati*, *reticulati*, *placentæ orbiculares*, *nebula*, and *spuma panis*, *crustula farracea*, *coronæ*, *panes numularii*, *denaria sacramentorum*, etc. By the enemies of religion it has also been stigmatized with various opprobrious epithets.

The host seems to have been used in the form above mentioned since the rise of the controversy with the Greek church in 1053.

The use of these thin cakes is discarded by most of the Reformed churches, but retained by the Lutherans.

### (b) *Of the Wine.*

1. *Colour of the wine.*—The common wine of Palestine is of a red or dark colour. Such was the wine which our Saviour used at the sacrament, as it would seem both from the nature of the case and from the declaration *this is my blood*, as well as from the scriptural expression, the *blood* of the grape, etc. The colour of the wine was not considered as essential, but the red wines were generally preferred to the white.<sup>1</sup> In the Greek church and some Protestant churches on the continent white wine is used, but this is not regarded as important.

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\* De his quæ in parochianis ecclesiis offeruntur.—*Conc. Aurel. c. xiv.*; *De Oblationibus*, c. xv.



*Of the mixture of wine with water.*—The ancient churches universally mixed water with the sacramental wine. This mixture was called *χρᾶμα*, from *κεράννυμι*, *misceo*. By the Latin authors it was styled *mixtum*, *temperatum*. Some speak of this mixing of wine with water as an express precept of Christ.<sup>2</sup> Others rely upon precedent and early usage for authority.<sup>3</sup> But whatever may have been the origin of this custom, it was abundantly authorized by the canons of the church,<sup>4</sup> and early became an established usage.

The Armenians used wine alone; others used only water; but both were condemned as heretics.

Protestants, at the Reformation, abandoned this ancient rite of the church, not as being unlawful or injurious, but because it was maintained by the Catholics merely on the ground of ecclesiastical authority.

The proportion of water mixed with the wine varied at different times. Sometimes it was one-fourth; at others, one-third. The Western church mixed cold water only. The Greek church first mixed cold water, and afterward added warm water, just before the distribution. This was said to be emblematical at once of the fire of the Holy Spirit, and of the water which flowed from our Saviour's side.<sup>5</sup>

Various other idle questions relating to the sacred elements at times agitated the church; and various superstitious ceremonies were observed by different branches of the church, which it were superfluous to mention in detail. With some it was a question, of what form and of what material the bread should be made—whether of the flour of wheat or barley, or of that of some other grain. Others mingled salt and oil with the bread. Some substituted water for wine. Others used wine mingled with water, at one time cold, at another warm, and again mixed with vinegar. Indeed, this sacred ordinance of the Lord's supper, in itself so simple and so impressive, has been dishonoured, at times, by casuistical discussions too ridiculous to be gravely related; and desecrated by rites too horrible to be mentioned.

#### § 10. OF THE CONSECRATION OF THE ELEMENTS.

THE consecration of the elements began at an early period to be performed with great formality, and with a set form of words and prayer, which were the subject of frequent discussion in different churches. It would be inconsistent with the design of this work to

enumerate the various controversies that have prevailed on this subject. In general, the church has agreed that the elements should be set apart to a sacramental use by prayer. The words given in the original institution were uniformly included in the consecrating prayer. Some contended that a personal invocation of the Holy Spirit was essential to a due consecration of the elements. But all agreed in supplicating the graces of the Spirit to sanctify these gifts to them, and to make them partakers of the body and blood of Christ, *i. e.* of the benefits of his death.

*Elevation of the host.*—As early, perhaps, as the third or fourth century, it became customary in the Eastern church to exhibit the consecrated elements to the people, to excite their veneration for the sacred mysteries of the sacrament. In the Middle Ages the host became the subject of adoration, under the notion that the elements, by transubstantiation, became the body and blood of Christ. This theological dogma was introduced into Gaul in the twelfth century, and into Germany in the thirteenth.

#### § 11. OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE ELEMENTS.

BOTH the bread and the wine were universally administered to the clergy and laity alike until about the twelfth century, when the cup began, in the Western church, gradually to be withdrawn from the laity, on account of the disorders to which the use of it had given rise.\* The Greek retains substantially the ancient custom. Protestants universally concur in administering both elements.

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\* Certum est, omnes passim clericos et laicos viros et mulieres, sub utraque specie sacra mysteria antiquitus sumsisse, cum solemnī eorum celebrationi aderant et offerebant et de oblatīs participabant. Extra sacrificiū vero et extra ecclesiam semper et ubique communiō sub una specie in usu fuit. Primæ parti assertiōnis consentiunt omnes, tam catholici quam sectarii; nec eam negare potest, qui vel levissimā rerum ecclesiasticarum notitiā imbutus sit. Semper enim et ubique ab ecclesiæ primordiis usque ad sæculum xii. sub specie panis et vini communicarunt fideles; cœpitque paulatim ejus sæculi initio usus calicis obsolescere, plerisque episcopis eum populo intercidentibus ob periculum irreverentiæ et effusionis, quod inevitabile erat aucta fidelium multitudine, in qua deesse non poterant minus cauti et attenti et parum religiosi. . . Paulatim introducta est communiō sub sola specie panis, posteaquam intolerandi abusus religiosos antistites ad abrogandum communem calicis usum induxerunt. Moribus enim immutatis leges quoque mutandæ sunt, quæ aliquando utiles atque optimæ fuerunt. Hæc autem mutatio facta est primum a diversis episcopis in suis ecclesiis, deinde a Synodo Constantiensi canonica sanctione pro omnibus stabilita.—BONA, *Rer. Liturg.* lib. ii. c. xviii. § 1. Ab ecclesiæ exordio ad sæculum usque xii. eucharistiam etiam laicis sub utraque specie in publico solemnique eucharistiæ minis-

The strictest order was observed under the hierarchy in distributing the elements to the different ranks of people. The clergy first received them, and the others in a regular succession.\* This rule is disregarded by Protestants, with the exception of the English Episcopal church.

The communicants received the elements at the altar. The Council of Laodicea,<sup>1</sup> in the fourth century, c. 19, however, admitted only the clergy to the altar. The laity, and communicants of the other sex, from this time, usually received the elements from without the chancel.

It is observable that the primitive Christians used no established form in presenting the elements. This is the more remarkable, inasmuch as they were so careful in regard to their baptismal formulary; and is to be accounted for only from the fact that the form of the original institution was introduced into the sacramental prayer.

The earliest form of which we have any record was also the most simple and concise. In presenting the elements respectively, the presiding elder said: "The body of Christ; the blood of Christ; the cup of life." To which the communicant replied, "Amen."<sup>2</sup> This response was, in time, omitted by the laity, and only repeated by the clergy; but it is not known at what time this change took place.

Under Gregory the Great, and subsequently, the forms following

terio fuisse ministratam, (etsi non semper et necessario,) nullus est inter catholicos qui ignorat, si vel levissima rerum ecclesiasticarum notitia sit imbutus. Verum crescente indies fidelium numero, cum sanguis non raro a populo minus cauto et parum religioso fuerit effusus, primum introducta fuit consuetudo, ut ope tubuli vel fistulæ cujusdam sumeretur, quæ fundo calicis, teste Lindano, quandoque fuit ferruminata, ne ob incultioris populi rusticitatem tam facile effundi posset. Ast cum et hæc praxis sua haberet incommoda, cœperunt sacerdotes populo panem eucharisticam pretioso sanguine intinctum distribuere: qui mos sæculo xi. et xii. multis ecclesiis fuit familiaris. Verum cum illum reprobarint ecclesiæ aliæ, nec inconvenientiis satis iretur obviam, calicis usus sæc. xiii. semper semperque minui, et tandem sæc. xiv. fere generaliter obsolescere cœpit, donec sæc. xv. post exortam Hussitarum hæresin calix publico ecclesiæ decreto laicis omnibus fuerit sublatus.—KRAZER, *de Liturg.* p. 567.

\* Ordo communionis hic erat, ut primo quidem celebrans seipsum communicaret, deinde episcopos, si qui aderant, vel presbyteros simul cum eo synaxin agentes: tum diaconos, subdiaconos et clericos, monachos, diaconissas et sacras virgines; novissime populum adjuvantibus presbyteris, primum viros, postea mulieres. Idem in calicis distributione servabatur, nisi quod presbyteri per se illum sumebant, diaconi a presbyteris, reliqui a diaconis, ut ex ordine Romano et ex Græcorum Euchologio constat.—BONA, *Rer. Liturg.* lib. ii. c. xvii. p. 858.

were in use: "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve you unto eternal life." "The body and the blood of the Lamb of God, which is given to you for the remission of sins." "May the body and the blood of the Lamb of God be to you the salvation of soul and body." "May the body and the blood of the Lamb of God avail you to the remission of sins, and to life eternal."<sup>3</sup>

When the bread was dipped in the wine, the form of distribution ran thus: "The body of the Lord Jesus Christ, dipped in his blood, preserve your soul unto everlasting life."<sup>4</sup>

The Syriac and Greek churches had also each their own peculiar forms. But the Protestant churches have, with great propriety, restored the original and significant form: "Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you," etc.

Abuses connected with the celebration of this ordinance very early crept into the church.<sup>5</sup> To correct these the bread and wine were at one time mingled together; at another, the wine was withheld, and the bread only administered; and again the elements were presented to the lips, instead of being delivered into the hands. The Protestant churches, generally, have returned to the ancient mode of presenting the bread and wine singly into the hands of each communicant.

The custom of the Greek church was to receive the sacrament standing, and such at first was probably the usage of the Western church.

What remained of the consecrated elements was sometimes distributed to the communicants who remained, sometimes given to children, at other times burned, and again reserved for private communion. The latter appears to have been the most common usage. After the doctrine of transubstantiation became a dogma of the church, the elements were gathered up with the most scrupulous care, as they still are in the Catholic church.

## § 12. OF THE ACCOMPANYING RITES.

1. *Psalmody in connection with the Sacrament.*—The Apostolical Constitutions prescribe the 34th Psalm to be sung on this occasion; certain parts being supposed peculiarly appropriate.<sup>1</sup> "I will bless the Lord at all times." "O taste and see that the Lord is good." Certain other psalms were also in use in different churches, such as the 133d, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," or the 45th, "My heart is in-

ding a good matter," or the 145th, "I will extol thee, my God, O King." To these may be added the 42d, 43d, and 139th Psalms.<sup>2</sup> These were sung during the distribution. Besides these, it was customary to begin and to conclude the whole ceremony with some solemn form of praise and thanksgiving, in which the whole body of the communicants joined. These were selected, for the most part, from the book of Psalms; but they varied in different times and places.

2. *Of the kiss of charity.*<sup>3</sup>—This form of salutation, as a token of Christian affection, appears to have been an apostolic custom, Rom. xvi. 16; 1 Cor. xvi. 20; 2 Cor. xiii. 12; 1 Thess. v. 26; 1 Pet. v. 14, and was perpetuated for many centuries. It was appropriately one of the rites of the sacramental service; but was observed on common occasions of public worship. It was omitted on Good Friday, in remembrance of the traitorous kiss of Judas Iscariot. In the Eastern church it preceded the consecration; in the Western, it followed that rite.

The different sexes, however, were not permitted to interchange this salutation one with another. Many other precautions were also used to prevent abuses which might be expected to arise out of this practice.<sup>4</sup> It was for the enemies of Christianity the occasion of abundant reproach; but it was still continued through the eighth and ninth centuries, even to the thirteenth, when it appears to have ceased.

The following passage from the nineteenth canon of the Council of Laodicea is worthy of remark on other accounts, as well as for its prescription concerning this token of Christian charity and concord. "After the bishops' sermons, (μετὰ τὰς ὁμιλίας τῶν ἐπισκόπων,) let a prayer for the catechumens be first pronounced. When the catechumens have left the church, let the prayer for the penitents (τῶν ἐν μετανοίᾳ) be said. After these have received imposition of hands (προσελθόντων ὑπὸ χεῖρα) and have retired, let the three prayers of the faithful (τῶν πιστῶν τὰς εὐχὰς τρεῖς) be offered; the first in silence, (διὰ σιωπῆς,) but the second and third aloud, (διὰ προσφωνήσεως.) Then let the kiss be given, (τὴν εἰρήνην,) i. e. the kiss of peace. When the presbyters have given this kiss to the bishop, let the laity exchange it among themselves. Hereupon let the holy sacrifice be accomplished. But it is permitted to the clergy (τοῖς ἱερατικοῖς) alone to approach the altar and communicate there." All this proceeds upon the system of secret instruction.



3. *Incense and the sign of the cross.*—The use of incense in connection with the sacrament was unknown in the church until the time of Gregory the Great, in the latter part of the sixth century. After this period it became prevalent in the churches. It was one of a multitude of perversions which resulted from the attempt to make the sacrificial rites of the Jewish dispensation a pattern and type of the ordinances of the Christian church.

The signing of the cross has a higher antiquity. It is spoken of by Basil,<sup>5</sup> Chrysostom,<sup>6</sup> and Augustin,<sup>7</sup> and is distinctly mentioned in the Apostolical Constitutions<sup>8</sup> as a part of the sacramental service. This ceremony may have been the means of exciting the devotion and confirming the faith of the early Christians, but it became the occasion of such superstition that it is deservedly neglected in Protestant churches. The Roman missal directs the use of this sign no less than fifty-five times.

#### § 13. OF THE AGAPÆ, OR FEASTS OF CHARITY.

THESE feasts were usually celebrated in connection with the Lord's supper; but not as a necessary part of it. From their connection with this ordinance, the following account of them is inserted in this place.

The history of the common meals or feasts in the church, called agapæ, (*ἀγάπαι*, more frequently than in the singular, *ἡ ἀγάπη*,) is in many respects obscure. It appears that they were not independent rites, but always connected with some act or office of public worship. When they were celebrated in connection with the Lord's supper, they seem to have taken place before the administration of that sacrament, in conformity with the circumstances of the original institution, which took place "after supper." 1 Cor. xi. 25. This arrangement is supposed to have led to the disorders which St. Paul so sharply reprov'd in the Corinthian church; and the inconvenience of it becoming generally manifest, it was soon made the practice of the church to celebrate the Lord's supper first, and even to dispense with attendance at the feast which followed, although all Christians were required to contribute provisions for it, according to their ability.<sup>1</sup>

But, even under these altered circumstances, the love-feasts were frequently attended with intemperance, and other serious disorders, which form subjects of grave complaint in the writings of the fathers.<sup>2</sup> This may perhaps be reckoned among the causes of the

change in the time of celebrating the Lord's supper, already mentioned, from the evening to the early part of the morning. And hence it was, that afterward the holding of agapæ within the churches was forbidden.<sup>3</sup> And by this regulation the agapæ became entirely distinct from the eucharist, which continued to be publicly celebrated in the church.

1. *Origin of the name and of the custom.*—The Greek word agapæ, ἀγάπη, which signifies love, or charity, is used in ecclesiastical antiquities to denote a certain feast, of which all members of the church, of whatever rank or condition, partook together; intended to denote and cherish those dispositions of brotherly love and affection which the gospel prescribes to the disciples of Jesus. In the New Testament, the word occurs only once in this sense of *feast of charity*, or *love-feast*, namely in the Epistle of St. Jude, verse 12, and there it is found in the plural number; but the observance itself is alluded to in the sacred records, under other names, as *meat*, *tables*. Acts ii. 46; vi. 2. The word was retained by ecclesiastical writers, but not to the exclusion of other significant appellations; e. g. συμπόσια, *banquets*; κοινὰ τράπεζαι, *public tables*; κοινὰ ἐστιάσεις, *public feasts*; δεῖπνα κοινά, *public suppers*. This use of the term ἀγάπη is not found in the writings of any profane authors before the Christian era; but it occurs in the works of Plutarch and Celsus, who doubtless borrowed it from the Christians.

It is certain that the feast of charity was celebrated in the earliest period of the Christian church. See Acts ii. 46; vi. 2; 1 Cor. xi. 16–34. Some writers suppose that this custom had its remote origin in the practice of the heathen; while others regard it as derived from the Jewish synagogue. But it is perhaps still more probable that it originated simply in the circumstances of our Lord's last supper with his disciples; or that, at all events, it is to be attributed entirely to the genius of a religion which is eminently a bond of brotherly union and concord among its sincere professors.

After the example of the Jewish passover, and of the original institution, the Lord's supper was accordingly at first united with a *social meal*. Both constituted a whole, representing a communion of the faithful with their Lord, and their brotherly communion with one another; both together were called the supper of the Lord, (δεῖπνον τοῦ κυρίου, δεῖπνον κυριακόν,) the supper of love, (ἀγάπη.) There was a daily celebration of this Christian communion in the first church at Jerusalem; the phrase κλᾶν ἄρτον,

breaking of bread, in Acts ii. 46, is most probably to be understood of them both together. In like manner we find them both united in the first church at Corinth; and so it probably was with the innocent, simple meal of the Christians of which Pliny speaks, in his report to the emperor Trajan. On the contrary, in the description given by Justin Martyr, we find the celebration of the supper entirely separated from those feasts of brotherly love, if indeed they still continued to exist in those churches which he had in view. This separation was occasioned partly by irregularities similar to those which had arisen in the Corinthian church, when the spirit that prevailed in these feasts became unsuited to the holy rite which followed, and partly by local circumstances, which prevented generally the institution of such social meals. In truth, these meals were especially calculated to excite the jealousy of the heathen, and gave birth to the strangest and most malicious reports,—a circumstance which may have early led to their abolition or less frequent observance.

We now speak first of these feasts of brotherly love, as they were afterward, when, separated from the supper of the Lord, they went under the particular name of agapæ, (*ἀγάπαι*.) At these, all distinctions of earthly condition and rank were to disappear in Christ. All were to be one in the Lord; rich and poor, high and low, masters and servants, were to eat together at a common table. We have the description of such a feast of agapæ by Tertullian.<sup>4</sup> (Already cited, p. 274.)

2. *Mode of celebration.*—In the earliest accounts which have come down to us, we find that the bishop or presbyter presided at these feasts.<sup>5</sup> It does not appear whether the food was dressed in the place appointed for the celebration of the feast, or was previously prepared by individual members of the church at their own homes; but perhaps either of these plans was adopted indifferently, according to circumstances. Before eating, the guests washed their hands; and a public prayer was offered up. A portion of Scripture was then read, and the president proposed some questions upon it, which were answered by the persons present. After this, any accounts which had been received respecting the affairs of other churches were recited; for, at that time, such accounts were regularly transmitted from one community to another, by means of which all Christians became acquainted with the history and condition of the whole body, and were thus enabled to sympathize with, and in many cases to assist each other. Letters from bishops and other

eminent members of the church, together with the Acts of the Martyrs, were also recited on this occasion; and hymns or psalms were sung.<sup>6</sup> At the close of the feast, money was also collected for the benefit of widows and orphans, the poor, prisoners, and persons who had suffered shipwreck. Before the meeting broke up, all the members of the church embraced each other, in token of mutual brotherly love; and the whole ceremony was concluded with a philanthropic prayer.<sup>7</sup>

As the number of Christians increased, various deviations from the original practice of celebration occurred, which called for the censure of the governors of the church.<sup>8</sup> In consequence of these irregularities, it was appointed that the president should deliver to each guest his portion separately, and that the larger portions should be distributed among the presbyters, deacons, and other officers of the church.

While the church was exposed to persecution, these feasts were not only conducted with regularity and good order, but were made subservient to Christian edification, and to the promotion of brotherly love, and of that kind of concord and union which was specially demanded by the circumstances of the times.<sup>9</sup> None but full members of the church were allowed to be present; catechumens, penitents, Jews, and heathens, being carefully excluded.<sup>10</sup> A custom of admitting baptized children, which was introduced at an early period, was afterward abandoned as inconvenient.<sup>11</sup>

3. *Time and Place of Celebration.*—*Time of day.*—These feasts, as well as all Christian assemblies, were held, at first, whenever and wherever opportunity would permit, consistently with safety. The passages of the New Testament which refer to the agapæ afford no intimation of the time of day in which they were celebrated, unless indeed we regard Acts xx. 7, as supplying some information on this point. From Tertullian it would appear that they were held in the night; for he calls them *cœnæ* and *cœnulæ*, in contradistinction to *prandia*; and this writer gives us to understand that lights were required in the place in which the feast was made. But it is probable that this nocturnal celebration was more a matter of necessity than of choice.

According to the account of Pliny in his letter to Trajan, it would seem that in his time (in Bithynia, at least) these feasts were held in the daytime.<sup>12</sup>

On the whole, it may be concluded that the nature of the case did not permit the uniform observance of any fixed hour or time of

day for the celebration of this feast, during the earliest period of the church, while it was exposed to persecution.

*Day of the week.*—These feasts were ordinarily held on the first day of the week, or Sunday; but the celebration does not appear to have been exclusively confined to that day.<sup>13</sup>

*Place of meeting.*—At first, the agapæ were celebrated in private houses, or in other retired places, in which the Christians met for the purpose of religious worship. After the erection of churches, these feasts were held within their walls; until, abuses having occurred which rendered the observance inconsistent with the sanctity of such places, this practice was forbidden. In the middle of the fourth century, the Council of Laodicea enacted “that agapæ should not be celebrated in churches;” a prohibition which was repeated by the Council of Carthage, in the year 391; and was afterward strictly enjoined during the sixth and seventh centuries.<sup>14</sup> By the efforts of Gregory of Neocæsarea, Chrysostom, and others, a custom was generally established of holding the agapæ only under trees, or some other shelter, in the neighbourhood of the churches; and from that time the clergy and other principal members of the church were recommended to withdraw from them altogether.

In the early church, it was usual to celebrate agapæ on the festivals of martyrs, *agapæ natalitiæ*, at their tombs; a practice to which reference is made in the Epistle of the Church of Smyrna, concerning the martyrdom of Polycarp.<sup>15</sup>

These feasts were sometimes celebrated on a smaller scale, at marriages, *agapæ connubiales*, and funerals, *agapæ funerales*.

4. *Abolition of the custom.*—These agapæ lost by degrees their true original significancy, which it was impossible for them to retain except under the first simple relations of the communities. They became often a lifeless form, no longer animated by the original spirit of brotherly love, which removed all distinctions between men and united together all hearts as one. Many abuses crept into them, which furnished occasion for the maliciously disposed to present the whole solemnity in the most unfavourable light. As usually happens in such cases, some attributed undue importance to the dead form, as an *opus operatum*; others unjustly condemned the whole custom, without distinguishing the right use of it from its abuse; neither party being any longer capable of appreciating the simple, childlike spirit in which this festival had originated. Wealthy individuals of the church provided agapæ of this sort, and imagined they had done something peculiarly meritorious;



and here, where all should be on a level, attention began to be paid to distinction of ranks, and the clergy, who should have set an example of humility to all, allowed themselves to be distinguished by outward preferences unworthy of their calling. An ungentle, morose, ascetic spirit condemned these agapæ altogether, and eagerly caught at every particular instance of abuse on these occasions, which was set out in exaggerated colours, for the purpose of bringing into discredit the whole custom. Such was the course of Tertullian after he became a Montanist. Clement of Alexandria expresses himself with greater moderation; although he declares his opposition to those who imagined they could purchase with banquets the promises of God, and who seemed to degrade the heavenly name of love, by such a particular appropriation of it to these banquets.

The celebration of the agapæ was frequently made a subject of calumny and misrepresentation by the enemies of the Christian faith, even during the earliest and best ages of the church. In reply to these groundless attacks, the conduct of the Christians of those times was successfully vindicated by Tertullian, Minucius Felix, Origen, and others. But real disorders having afterward arisen, similar to those which are rebuked in the Corinthian church, 1 Cor. xi. 21, 22, and having proceeded to considerable lengths, it became necessary to abolish the practice altogether; and this task was eventually effected, but not without the application of various means, and only after a considerable lapse of time. The Council of Laodicea, A. D. 320, (372) c. 28, forbade the use of the church for such festivities and excesses. Chrysostom and Augustin, a few years later, severely censured these excesses. At the suggestion of the latter, the third Council of Carthage, A. D. 397, c. 30, renewed the prohibition of the Council of Laodicea, which was repeated in the sixth century by the Council of Orleans of the Western church, and again in the seventh century by that of the Eastern church at Constantinople.

#### § 14. SACRAMENTAL UTENSILS.

OUR Lord, at the institution of the sacrament, without doubt used the cup which was in common use among the Jews on festive occasions—simple and plain like the rude vessels of those days. But a large silver goblet was in use at Jerusalem in the seventh century, which was said to be the identical cup that our Lord used

on that occasion. At a period still later, the inhabitants of Valencia in Spain, also claimed, with equal probability, to be in possession of the identical cup which was presented by Christ to his disciples at that time.

The cup which was used by the primitive church was of no prescribed form, nor of any uniform material. It was made of wood, horn, glass, or marble, according to circumstances. But, at a very early period the sacramental cup began to be wrought with great care, and to be made of the most costly materials, such as silver and gold, set with precious stones. In the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries, the use of vessels made of horn, wood, glass, lead, tin, etc., was forbidden, and each church was required to have, at least, one cup and plate of silver.

Two cups were generally used, one exclusively by the clergy, the other, of larger dimensions, by the laity. These had handles attached to their sides. The sacramental cup of the Armenian church is said to contain two separate apartments, in one of which the wine is contained, and in the other the bread. And similar vessels seem to have been in use in the Christian church previous to the eighth century. They then began to be made with a pipe attached to them, like the spout of a teapot, and the wine was received from the vessel by suction. These spouts were called *fistulae eucharistæ, pagilares, arundines, cannæ, canales, pipæ*. These pipes were used to prevent the waste of any drop of the consecrated wine in the distribution of it. Such cups are still in use in some Lutheran churches.

The cup was at an early period ornamented with inscriptions and pictorial representations.

The platter for the distribution of the bread was, at first, a basket made of osier. Like the cup, it has from time to time been made of glass, marble, silver, and gold, varying in form, size, and style of execution, corresponding with that of the cup.

The pomp and superstition of Catholic worship have added many other articles to the sacramental vessels, which are enumerated by Siegel, from whom the above is extracted.

From this survey, it appears that the ordinance of the Lord's supper continued until the third century to be administered in the expressive simplicity of its original institution. Common bread and wine were set apart for this purpose, a prayer was offered, and the elements were received in remembrance of our Lord's death. A mutual salutation and a song concluded the solemnity.

From the third century this ordinance, like that of baptism, began to be encumbered with other rites, which, accumulating from age to age, overlaid it with endless ceremonials and superstitions. These had their origin essentially in the false notion advanced by the hierarchy, that their's was a levitical priesthood, the medium appointed of God for the communication of his grace to man, together with the efficacy of the sacerdotal consecration, and the doctrine of the Divine presence in the eucharist. The consecration becomes now a liturgical service, prescribed with great minuteness, and performed with manifold solemnities. The office becomes an awful mystery, assayed by the consecrated priest; the bread becomes the body, and the wine the blood of Christ, imparting grace unto salvation and eternal life. The *consecration* now gives this significant importance to the elements. The *eulogia*, bread that has been duly blest by the bishop, is reverently reserved in store for sacramental use. It is preserved in families for private use. It is taken to sea for the mariner in his absence, and becomes an essential provision for the traveller on his journey, and at times is even deposited in the coffins of the dead previous to interment. Hence the reasons also for administering the eucharist to the unconscious infant and to the lifeless body of the deceased; hence the adoration of the host, and cumbersome ritual of high mass, investing with adventitious solemnity these sacred mysteries.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE AND PENANCE.

#### § 1. OF THE DISCIPLINE OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

THIS subject of ecclesiastical discipline, like almost every thing relating to the ancient church, is first to be contemplated as it existed in the apostolical and primitive church; and then, as modified and almost totally changed under the episcopal hierarchy. In the one instance, discipline was administered by the church collectively; in the other, by the priesthood. At first it was a simple and efficient process with an offending member, consisting in a public exclusion of him by the vote of the church, after suitable admonition, from their fellowship and communion. Then it became a long and complicated system of penance, public or private, administered by the priesthood. Under the apostles, and in the first two centuries of the Christian æra, the authority of the church and its disciplinary power was vested in its own body collectively; under the hierarchy, it was an usurpation of the priesthood. These positions have been discussed in another place.<sup>1</sup>

It is worthy of remark, that a *mutual covenant*, involving the right of discipline by the church, appears to have been originally a condition of church-membership. This is a consideration of great importance, because it affects almost the entire organization of the church; and yet it has generally been passed in silence by archæologists. It becomes therefore pertinent and important to consider what relations one assumed originally on making a public profession of the religion of Christ and uniting with a Christian church. Our position is that his union with the church was solemnized, not only by a declaration of his faith, but by a mutual covenant between himself and the church, which involved the right and the duty, on the part of that body, of excluding him from their fellowship and communion whenever he became chargeable with a continued disregard and violation of these covenant vows.

*A mutual covenant was the basis of ecclesiastical discipline in the primitive church.*

1. Such a covenant is implied as a *necessary condition of church-membership*. A church is a voluntary association of believers, united together for their mutual edification in the enjoyment of religious privileges. Such an association involves mutual obligations on the part of the several members of the fraternity. On connecting himself with the church, one assumes new obligations to that body, and they in turn assume new relations and obligations toward him, so that the act of uniting with the church of necessity implies a mutual covenant, whether publicly expressed or not, between the members of the church and the individual whom they receive into their fellowship and communion. Both pledge themselves, by the relations which they assume, to a faithful discharge of the responsibilities mutually required of them by the relations into which they now enter one with another. They pledge themselves to each other by a mutual covenant, expressed or implied.

2. *The jurisdiction of the apostolical churches over their members implies the existence of a mutual covenant between the members of these churches respectively.* The apostles declined official jurisdiction over the churches which they organized. They submitted to the church the choice of the seven deacons, and even of an apostle in the place of the apostate Judas. Acts i. 15 *et. seq.*; vi. 1-6. Cyprian, an early and earnest defender of episcopal prerogative, distinctly recognises in both these instances the jurisdiction of the church over the ministry, and the importance of it as a means of guarding the sacred office from the intrusion of bad men.\* The apostle Paul earnestly enjoins the church at Corinth to exercise their authority in excommunicating a scandalous member of their communion. He, in connection with Barnabas and others, was delegated by the church at Antioch to go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about a question which had arisen among them respecting a certain rule of discipline. When this delegation came

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\* Quod postea secundum divina magisteria observatur in Actis Apostolorum, quando de ordinando in locum Judæ apostolo, Petrus *ad plebem* loquitur: Surrexit, inquit, Petrus in medio discentium; fuit autem turba *in uno*. Nec hoc in episcoporum ordinationibus observasse apostolos animadvertimus; de quo et ipso in Actis eorum scriptum est. Et convocaverunt, inquit, duodecim, totam plebem discipulorum et dixerunt eis. Quod utique idcirco, tamen diligenter et caute convocata plebe tota, gerebatur, *ne quis ad altaris ministerium, vel ad sacerdotalem locum indignus obreperet.*—*Epist.* 67.



to Jerusalem, "they were received *of the church*, and of the apostles and elders." Acts xv. The sequel shows that the question was received and decided *by the church*, the apostles and elders acting with them.

The apostles also, in their epistles to the churches, when treating, not only of doctrines, but of subjects relating to their discipline and jurisdiction, address, not the presbyters or pastors, but the communities themselves. Clement of Rome, A. D. 96, addresses his epistle, in like manner, to the *church* of Corinth, in the name of the church of Rome, which also sent it by the hands of five delegates, who were commissioned to use their influence to quiet the dissensions which had arisen there in consequence of the disaffection of certain members toward their presbyters or teachers. This epistle recognises the jurisdiction of the church in the election and dismissal of their pastors, and urges the disaffected members to submit to the will of the majority, "that the flock of Christ may be in peace with its appointed presbyters."<sup>2</sup>

The right of the church to exercise such authority over its members presupposes a mutual recognition of this authority as a condition of admission to the church, and a covenant on the part of each member to submit to its jurisdiction.

3. *We have direct historical evidence of the existence of a mutual covenant between Christians.* Pliny, as governor of Bithynia in Asia Minor, A. D. 103-4, had been instructed by Trajan to keep a strict guard against all secret societies; and, under this commission, proceeded to judicial investigations respecting the assemblies of Christians in that province. He took the testimony of persons of both sexes, of all ranks, and of every age, some of whom fearlessly avowed themselves to be Christians; others, that they had been such, but had renounced the profession. These all affirmed, however, "that the whole of their guilt, or error, was, that they met on a certain stated day, before it was light, and addressed themselves in a form of prayer to Christ as God, *binding themselves by a covenant*, not for the purpose of any wicked design, but never to commit any fraud, theft, or adultery; never to falsify their word, nor to deny a trust when they should be called upon to deliver it up.\*

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\* Affirmabant autem, hanc fuisse summam vel culpæ suæ vel erroris, quod essent soliti stato die ante lucem convenire, carmenque Christo quasi Deo dicere secum invicem; seque *sacramento*, non in scelus aliquod, *obstringere*, sed ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellati abnegarent.—PLIN. *ad Traj.*

A *sacramentum* was a solemn oath or pledge for the fulfilment of a voluntary engagement, and is precisely the term for a Roman civilian, like Pliny, to use to express the obligations assumed by a covenant between the different members of a Christian community. Such an oath, pledge, or promise, voluntarily assumed by them, becomes a *sacramentum*, a covenant of the most sacred character.

The passage under consideration is cited both by Tertullian and Eusebius, each in his own language, according to his interpretation of it. In his Apology, Tertullian refers to the examination of Christians by Pliny, and repeats the declaration of the Roman governor that he found no cause of complaint against them, except their obstinacy in refusing to sacrifice, their early assemblies for the worship of Christ as God, and their *confederated discipline*, *confœderatam disciplinam*, covenant obligations prohibiting murder, adultery, fraud, perfidy, and all other crimes.\*

The original of Pliny and the paraphrase of Tertullian forcibly illustrate the efforts of the primitive church, by a mutual confederacy, to guard their communion against the reproach of scandalous crimes, which their enemies were ever ready to charge upon them. In another passage, this ancient father speaks of the "*conditions of the covenant* by which we become united to this sect."† This again presents it as an agreement, compact, or covenant, between the parties concerned, the church on the one hand—and, on the other, the communicant about to be received.

Tertullian, again, in his address to martyrs in prison, appeals to their baptismal vows to encourage their steadfastness under persecution. "We enlisted in this warfare of the living God when we responded to the vows of that covenant."‡

Justin Martyr, born about the time that the last of the apostles ceased from his care of the churches, makes a confession of faith and a covenant the conditions of receiving baptism. The passage has been cited in the preceding chapter. The term used by Justin to express this covenant is *ὑποσχῶνται*, in which, as Neander

\* Plinium, præter obstinationem non sacrificandi, nihil aliud se de sacramentis eorum comperisse quam cœtus antelucanos ad canendum Christo ut Deo, et ad *confœderandam disciplinam*; homicidium, adulterium, fraudem, perfidiam et cetera scelera prohibentes.—*Apol.* c. ii.

† Cum ad hanc sectam, utique suscepta conditione ejus pacti, venerimus.—*Ad Scap.* c. i.

‡ Vocati sumus ad militiam Dei vivi, jam tunc cum in sacramenti verba respondimus.—*Ad Mar.* c. iii.

observes, "instruction in doctrine is presupposed, and the corresponding conduct of the life derived from it; and both are supposed to be so united with each other, that those who wished to receive baptism should declare themselves convinced of the truth of the doctrines they had been taught, and *bind themselves to rule their lives by them.*"

Origen also affirms, that the candidates were required "to make the most solemn protestations of their desire and purpose to live in conformity with Christian duty."\* If any of these subsequently fell into scandalous sin, they were excommunicated and "bemoaned as dead;" and if on repentance they were restored, they were received as "alive from the dead."<sup>3</sup> Such were the mutual relations which the members of the church considered themselves as sustaining by their covenant vows.<sup>4</sup> Such relations are distinctly recognised even by Cyprian,<sup>5</sup> who, in his efforts to exalt the dignity and authority of the bishop, did more than all his predecessors to subvert the original constitution of the church.

4. The primitive churches recognised the mutual covenant relations of members in their discipline. The act of excommunication is indeed often ascribed to bishops and presbyters previous to the age of Cyprian. But such declarations, *in this period of the church*, do not imply the independent exercise of episcopal prerogatives. The bishop acted as the moderator of the church: as such, he may be said to have pronounced the sentence of excommunication, though acting only as the organ of the church.

Tertullian makes the sentence of excommunication to be the act, not of the bishop, but of the church. In speaking of those who violated the rules of chastity, he says, "we utterly remove them from the pale of the church."<sup>†</sup> Tertullian never held the office of a bishop: in this connection he speaks of no official act of his own, but of the associated action of the church.

"The faithful" in Asia Minor, A. D. 180 to 193, "held frequent conferences" throughout that country on the doctrines of the Montanists, and having examined these novel doctrines and pronounced them vain, rejected them as heresy, and expelled and prohibited from communion with the church those who held them. Observe also the action of the church in the case of Apollonius of Ephesus.<sup>6</sup>

Even Cyprian, with all his jealousy for the prerogatives of the

\* Οὐκ ἄλλο' τι βούλεσθαι ἢ τὰ Χριστιανοῖς δοκοῦντα.—*Contr. Cels.* lib. iii. c. i.

† Non modo limine, verum omni ecclesiæ tecto submovimus.—*De Pudicit.* c. iv.

bishop, accounts the suffrages of the people an essential part of the solemnity of excommunication.<sup>7</sup>

In this connection it is particularly worthy of consideration, that a confession before the church by one who had been guilty of a scandalous offence was an indispensable condition of his restoration to the communion of the church. Tertullian requires that inward compunction of conscience should be manifested by outward acts, by fasting and prayer, by the entire deportment of the transgressor, by a confession of his sins before the presbyters, and by earnest importunity in his behalf with the brethren,\* the friends of God. Many other passages of the same general import might be adduced, sufficient to show that such a confession to the church was required as a satisfaction for the injury done *to the fraternity* by the offence, as well as a just expression of penitence for the sin committed. The confession was, therefore, a recognition of covenant relations to the church. Tertullian, in connection with the passage just quoted, says, “the body cannot rejoice at the suffering of one of its members; but the whole body must share in the pain, and co-operate toward the cure.”

As those who had relapsed or fallen into scandalous sin made their confession to the church, so they were also restored to the communion and fellowship of the church by the vote of this body. Cyprian severely censures Therapius, his colleague, for having received into the fellowship of the church prematurely, and without the request or knowledge of the people, one, once a presbyter, who had fallen under the censure of the church.<sup>8</sup> He rebukes himself for a similar irregularity, in which the conservative power of the people was especially manifest. The men whom he had been instrumental in restoring, against the better judgment of the church, proved unworthy of his confidence. The same custom also prevailed at Rome, where a concourse of the brethren was held at the restoration of certain schismatics who, confessing their faults, sought forgiveness of the church. “All, with one voice, gave thanks to God, receiving them with tears, as if just released from prison.”†

This view of the covenant relations assumed in the primitive

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\* Plerumque vero jejuniis preces alere, ingemescere, lacrymari, et mugire dies noctesque ad Dominum suum, presbyteris advolvi, et caris Dei adgeniculari, omnibus fratribus legationis deprecationis sue injungere.—*De Penitentia*, c. ix.

† Una vox erat omnium gratias Deo agentium, gaudium pectoris lacrymis exprimentes, complectens eos quasi hodie pœna carceris fuissent liberati.—Cyp. *Epist.* 46.

church on a profession of the Christian faith, may be concluded in the words of Neander :—

“Whoever, by baptism, united himself to the Christian church, was required, by the covenant administered to him by the pastor of the church, to renounce the devil and his works, which involved not only a renunciation of idolatry, but of sins of every kind. The affirmative part of this oath was a covenant to live a religious life, corresponding to the precepts of Christ. This covenant was denominated the Christian’s military oath—*sacramentum militiæ Christianæ*; and the creed which they retained in memory, was the Christians pass or watch word—*tassera militiæ Christianæ, symbolum*.<sup>9</sup>

But the independence of the churches was gradually changed and finally subverted by the rise of the episcopal hierarchy. The authority which belonged to the church by means of their covenant relations, passed by degrees into the hands of the bishop, by virtue of his episcopal prerogatives, derived, as he soon began to claim, not from the church, but from the Great Head of the church through the apostolical succession. It was, in the language of Neander, “a retrogression of the Christian spirit to the Jewish”—the commencement of “a revolution destined to last for ages, and ever to unfold itself in a wider circle from the germ which had once been implanted.”

This retrogression was the fatal error of the ancient church, the *proton pseudon* of all that system of false assumptions and errors which, under the episcopal hierarchy, early supplanted the primitive organization of the church, perverted its ordinances, and finally ended in the superstition, the idolatry, the blasphemy, and the spiritual despotism of the papal supremacy.\*

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\* The following passages from Cyprian will illustrate his views of the authority and powers of the priesthood :—

Ne putent sibi vitæ aut salutis constare rationem, si episcopis et sacerdotibus obtemperare noluerint, cum in Deuteronomio Dominus dicat; et homo quicumque fecerit in superbia, ut non exaudiat sacerdotem, aut judicem, quicumque fuerit in diebus illis, morietur homo ille et omnis populus, cum audierit, timebit, et non agent impie etiam nunc. Interfici Deus jussit sacerdotibus suis non obtemperantes.—*Epist.* 4. Cum hæc tanta ac talia et multa alia exempla præcedant, quibus sacerdotalis auctoritas et potestas de divina dignatione firmatur, qualis putas eos esse qui sacerdotum hostes, et contra ecclesiam catholicam rebelles, nec præmonentis domini communicatione, nec futuri judicii ultione terrentur? Neque enim aliunde hæreses obortæ sunt, aut nata sunt schismata, quam inde, quod sacerdoti Dei non obtemperatur nec unus in ecclesia ad tempus sacerdos et ad tempus judex vice Christi cogitur.—*Epist.* 59. Comp. 75. *Epist. De Bapt. in Opp. Cyp.*



The clergy became now a mediating priesthood, independent of the church, and vested with authority from God to rule the church and its members; and, by outward ordinances, to communicate the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit.

This transition changed essentially the relations of the officers to the members of the church and the conditions of church-membership. The officers of the church, instead of receiving authority and office from that body for their service, claim authority and commission from God for the exercise of their functions. They are now the rulers, not the servants, as at the beginning they were, of the church. A union with the church by a public profession is a transaction, not so much between the church and the professing Christian as between him and the bishop. The contracting, covenanting parties are the bishop and the believer. The sovereign authority of the church is merged and lost in that of the priesthood.

Ecclesiastical discipline naturally resolves itself into a system of penance administered by the priesthood, in whom alone authority is vested for the punishment of offences. The confessional, which requires the offender to tell the tale of all his sins in the ear of a sinful creature like himself, and to bow down to degrading penance dictated by the confessor, is only a practical application of the power of a tyrannical priesthood. The deep degradation and debasement to which popery has reduced the people is its final result.

On the contrary, the total neglect of all discipline, as in the established churches in England and on the continent, is a result equally legitimate of wresting the disciplinary power from the laity, and concentrating it in the priesthood. Give the ministry the absolute and independent control of all ecclesiastical authority, and they will either abuse or neglect it. It is a recorded fact in all ecclesiastical history, that the great conservative power in the church, her ornament and her strength, the defence of her liberties, the preservation of her purity, is—the *laity*. The laity are at this time the only effectual safeguard against the disastrous encroachments of papacy and high-church prelacy in the Episcopal churches of England and America. This strange effort to “unprotestantize” these churches, and reinvolve them in the darkness, delusion, and degradation of papacy, is eminently a perversion of the priesthood, by which the people continue comparatively unaffected. The steadfastness of their faith is the hope, and may be the defence of the Episcopal church against that tide of error which is setting in upon

her like a flood, from the abominations of papacy. "The laity," says an American bishop—"The laity must save the church."

In view of the early organization and discipline of the Christian church, we may well pause to admire the wisdom and grace that directed the Puritans to take up the work of the reformation where Luther and others left it, and restore both the government and worship of the church to their primitive simplicity and purity. Immortal honour is indeed due to Luther and his coadjutors for the great work which they so nobly began. But Luther was not a radical reformer. He sought not to emancipate the church, either from the thralldom of the state, or the more disastrous bondage of the pope. He sought not to lead out the Israel of God from their house of bondage and reinstate them in the liberty wherewith God hath made his people free. He sought not to relieve the ritual of the enormous burden of forms and ceremonies and solemn absurdities with which popery, age after age, had been overlaying the simple worship of the primitive Christians. His effort was rather to correct the wrong than to restore the right, to reform rather than to revolutionize, to rectify rather than remove the abuses, superstitions, and errors of papacy. The church was in his view an ancient and venerable structure. It had stood fast for ages in solemn, gloomy grandeur, and against it he feared to raise a sacrilegious hand. His effort was to clear away the rubbish which had gathered, in the lapse of ages, about the sacred edifice, to repair its desolations, to renew its ancient solemn services and fill its vast courts again with devout worshippers. Amazed at the decay and rottenness which he everywhere discovered, he faltered at the effects of his own great arm in demolishing what he only thought to repair and adorn. He understood not the mission on which heaven had sent him, and stayed his hand when as yet he had but begun his work. To change the figure, he held in his hand the arrow of the Lord's deliverance; but, like the timid king of Israel, he smote three times and stayed; whereas he should have smitten five or six times, then had he smitten the enemy until he had consumed it.

It remained for other men at a later age, for the noble army of the Puritan dissenters, to re-establish the church on the foundation of Christ and the apostles, to reassert the liberties of the people, to reject, not only the superstitions and empty ceremonials of the popish ritual, but the formalities also of the liturgy and prayer book, and to restore the freedom and simplicity of primitive worship

## § 2. OF PENANCE.

THIS system of penance was manifestly of a *penal character*, a vindication of the laws of religion, and a warning against transgression, as well as a means of correction and reformation to the offender. Administered by the arbitrary dictation of the priesthood, it might easily be perverted for the gratification of private resentment and the accomplishment of sinister ends.

Penance, in the ecclesiastical sense of the term, is not an institution either of the Scriptures or of the apostolical and primitive church, but of the hierarchy. It is essentially an institution of prelacy or episcopacy, administered by the bishop.

Tertullian, † A. D. 220, speaks of certain acts of penance, and Cyprian also often speaks of them, but the different classes of penitents were not formed and their specific acts of humiliation prescribed until the fourth century, when prelacy had already superseded the primitive organization of the church, and changed her ordinances and her rites. "It cannot be denied that the consequence of *making outward* of the conception of the church, and of that Old Testament view of the priesthood had here already mixed in. Thus the judgment on an individual who had rendered himself liable to the church penance was reckoned among the acts of the priesthood; and the full power of exercising it, derived from the authority to bind and to loose, given to the apostles."<sup>1</sup>

Tertullian wrote a treatise on penitence, in which he teaches that repentance, consisting in a sorrow for sins committed, whether in act or thought, arising from a fear of God and tending to salvation, is necessary in order to baptism; and that, in case of sin after baptism, there is room once more, but only once, for repentance. This is to be accompanied with an outward act of penitence, ἐξομολόγησις. This book manifestly departs from the simplicity of Scripture, and contains various seeds of error.

Cyprian of Carthage defends the same general principles against the Novatians, who denied to the fallen Christian professor the grace of God and the hope of eternal salvation, and accordingly refused him the benefit of penance and readmission to the church. The sentiments of Tertullian and of Cyprian are fully developed in the note below, and in many other parts of their writings.\*

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\* Ne igitur ore nostro, quo pacem negamus, quo duritiam magis humanæ credulitatis, quam divinæ et paternæ pietatis opponimus, oves nobis commissæ a

§ 3. OF THE SUBJECTS OF PENANCE, OR THE OFFENCES FOR WHICH IT WAS IMPOSED.

PENANCE related only to such as had been excluded from the communion of the church. Its immediate object was, not the forgiveness of the offender by the Lord God, but *his reconciliation with the church*. It could, therefore, relate only to open and scandalous offences. *De occultis non judicat ecclesia*—the church takes no cognizance of secret sins—was an ancient maxim of the church. The early fathers say expressly that the church offers pardon only for offences committed against her. The forgiveness of all sin she refers to God himself. *Omnia autem*, says Cyprian, Ep. 55, *remissimus Deo omnipotenti, in cujus potestate sunt omnia reservata*.\* Such are the concurring sentiments of most of the early writers on this subject. It was reserved for a later age to confound these important distinctions, and to arrogate to the church the prerogative of forgiving sins.

Various synonymous expressions occur in the writings of Tertulian and Cyprian, to denote this mode of discipline, all of which are in accordance with the representations given above of penance, such as *disciplina, orandi disciplina, patientiæ disciplina, deifica disciplina, satisfactio, satisfacere*, etc. The last-mentioned terms imply a demand made by the church, on conditions imposed in order to a restoration to that body. Hence also the frequent ex-

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*Domino reposcantur: placuit nobis, Sancto Spiritu suggerente, et Domino per visiones multas et manifestas admonente, quia hostis imminere prænuntiatur et ostenditur, colligere intra castra milites Christi, examinatis singulorum causis, pacem lapsis dare, imo pugnaturis arma suggerere; quod credimus vobis quoque paternæ misericordiæ contemplatione placitum. Quod si de collegis aliquis exstiterit, qui urgente certamine pacem fratribus et sororibus non putat dandum, reddet ille rationem in die judicii Domino, vel importunæ censuræ, vel inhumanæ duritiæ suæ.*—CYPRIAN, Ep. 54 ad Cornelium, de pace Lapsis danda.

\* Nos, in quantum nobis et videre et judicare conceditur, faciem singulorum videmus, cor scrutari et mentem perspicere non possumus. De his judicat occultorum scrutator et cognitor cito venturus, et de arcanis cordis atque abditis judicaturus. Obesse autem mali bonis non debent, sed magis mali a bonis adjuvari. —*Id.* Ep. 55. Qua ex causa necessario apud nos fit, ut per singulos annos seniores et præpositi in unum conveniamus ad disponenda ea, quæ curæ nostræ commissa sunt, ut si qua graviora sunt, communi consilio dirigantur, lapsis quoque fratribus, et post lavacrum salutare a diabolo vulneratis per poenitentiam medela quærat: non quasi a nobis remissionem peccatorum consequantur, sed ut per nos ad intelligentiam delictorum suorum convertantur, et Domino plenius satisfacere cogantur.—FIRMILIAN, Ep. ad Cyprian, Ep. Cypri. 75.

pression, *pœnitentia canonica*, *canones pœnitentiales*—penitential exercises required by authority of councils and bishops.

In the ancient phraseology of the church, the *lapsed*, who after professing Christianity had abjured their faith, were included among the proper subjects of penance. The term was frequently applied in a wider sense, but in this restricted sense the lapsed were divided into several classes. 1. The *libellatici*—those who received from a Roman magistrate a warrant for their security, *libellum securitatis*, or *pacis*, certifying that they were not Christians, or that they were not required to sacrifice to the gods.<sup>1</sup> 2. The *sacrificati*, including all those who had sacrificed to heathen gods, whether by constraint or voluntarily.<sup>2</sup> 3. *Taditores*. This term came into use about forty years after the death of Cyprian, and was employed to denote those who had delivered up copies of the sacred Scriptures, church records, or any other property of the church.<sup>3</sup> These were chargeable with different degrees of guilt, according to the nature of their offence. They who had been guilty of murder and adultery were sometimes included under this class.

#### § 4. OF THE DIFFERENT CLASSES OF PENITENTS.

NEITHER Tertullian nor Cyprian make any mention of different classes of penitents. It is therefore to be presumed, that this distinction into several classes was made at a later period. They are first mentioned in the equivocal epistle of Gregory Thaumaturgus, bishop of Neocæsarea, which, if genuine, falls between A. D. 244 and A. D. 270. This classification was fully known in the fourth century,<sup>1</sup> and probably was first established in the latter part of the third century, or beginning of the fourth.

The penitents were divided into four classes or degrees, as follows:—

1. Προσχλαίοντες, *flentes*, *mourners* or *weepers*. These were rather candidates for penance than actual penitents. They were wont to lie prostrate in the porch of the church. Sometimes they knelt or stood, entreating the faithful and the clergy to intercede for them for their forgiveness and reconciliation. These were probably called χειμάζοντες, *hiemantes*, because they remained in the open air, not being permitted, on any occasion, to enter within the sacred enclosure of the church. Others suppose that demoniacs were designated by this name from the convulsions to which they were subject.

2. Ἀκροαμένοι, *audientes*, *hearers*. These were permitted to



enter within the doors, and to take their station in the narthex, or lowest part of the house, where they were allowed to hear the reading and exposition of the Scriptures, but were denied the privilege of joining in the prayers of the church. Basil and others prescribe three years as the term of their continuance in this order.<sup>2</sup> They were regarded as sustaining the same relations to the church as the first class of catechumens, and were known by the same name. They were distinguished, however, from the catechumens, by not being permitted to receive the imposition of hands.<sup>3</sup>

3. Ὑποκλίπτοντες, Γονυκλίνοντες, *substratī*, or *genuflectentes*, *prostrators*, *kneelers*. These were much the same as the third class of catechumens, who also bore the same name. They were permitted to remain at public prayer, but only in a kneeling posture. The catechumens took precedence of them in attendance upon prayers, and sooner passed into a higher grade. In this class of penitents they continued three, and sometimes even seven years.<sup>4</sup>

4. Συνιστάμενοι, *consistentes*, *by-standers*. This class take their name from their being permitted to *stand* with believers, and to join with them in prayer, but not to partake of the communion with them.<sup>5</sup> Whether they were permitted to remain as spectators of the sacramental service is uncertain. They continued in this class for the space of two years.

Some have supposed, but without sufficient reason, that there was a fifth class of penitents. The truth rather is that the distinction between these classes was not uniformly observed. In the time of Cyprian, the bishop had not, indeed, authority officially to regulate the rules of penance; still he exercised a controlling influence in these matters. But by later ecclesiastical rules, the bishop was authorized to abridge or extend the time allotted for penance. The Council of Ancyra, especially, accorded to the bishop a discretionary power in this respect, and particularly directs him charitably to consider the deportment of the offender, both before and after entering upon a course of penance, and to grant him a dispensation accordingly.\* This is the true origin of that practice which subsequently led to such enormous abuses—the *granting of indulgences*.

The *indulgentia paschalis*, so called, has a special reference to the penitents, and to their stations in the early church.

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\* Τὸς δὲ ἐπισκόπους ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν, τὸν τρόπον τῆς ἐπιστροφῆς δοκιμάσαντας φιλανθρωπεύεσθαι, ἢ πλείονα προστιθέναι χρόνον πρὸ πάντων δὲ καὶ ὁ προύγων βίος, καὶ οὐ μετὰ ταῦτα, ἐξετάξέσθω· καὶ οὕτως ἡ φιλανθρωπία ἐπιμετρεῖσθω.—*Conc. Ancyra. c. v*  
This rule was established also by *Constitut. Carolin. l. vii. c. 294*.

§ 5. OF THE DUTIES OF PENITENTS, AND THE DISCIPLINE IMPOSED UPON THEM; OR THE DIFFERENT KINDS AND DEGREES OF PENANCE.

PENANCE, as has been already observed, was wholly a *voluntary act* on the part of those who were subject to it. The church not only would not *enforce* it, but they refused even to urge or invite any to submit to this discipline. It was to be *sought* as a favour, not *inflicted* as a penalty. But the offending person had no authority or permission to prescribe his own duties as a penitent. When once he had resolved to seek the forgiveness and reconciliation of the church, it was, exclusively, the prerogative of the bishop to prescribe the conditions on which this was to be effected. No one could even be received as a candidate for penance, without permission first obtained of the bishop or presbyter as his representative, to which they were admitted by imposition of hands.

The duties required of penitents, consisted essentially in the following particulars:—

1. Penitents of the first three classes were required to *kneel in worship*, while the faithful were permitted to stand.

2. All were required to make known their penitential sorrow by an open and public confession of their sin. This confession was to be made, not before the bishop or the priesthood, but *in the presence of the whole church*, with sighs, and tears, and lamentations. These expressions of grief they were to renew and continue, so long as they remained in the first, or lowest class of penitents, entreating, at the same time, in their behalf, the prayers and intercession of the faithful. Some idea of the nature of these demonstrations of penitence may be formed from a record of them contained in the works of Cyprian.<sup>1</sup> Almost all the canons lay much stress upon the sighs and tears accompanying these effusions.

3. Throughout the whole term of penance, all expressions of joy were to be restrained, and all ornaments of dress to be laid aside. The penitents were required, literally, to wear sackcloth, and to cover their heads with ashes.\* Nor were these acts of humiliation

\* Ὅστε ἐῶθεν ἀναστῆναι, καὶ ἐνδυσάμενον σάκκον, καὶ σποδὸν καταπασάμενον μετὰ πολλῆς σπουδῆς, καὶ δακρύων προσπεσεῖν.—EUSEB. *Hist. Eccl.* lib. v. c. 28. Quis hoc crederet, ut saccum indueret, ut errorem publice fateretur, et tota urbe spectante Romana, ante diem paschæ in Basilica Laterani staret in ordine pœnitentium?—HIERON. *Ep.* 30, *Epil. Fab.* De ipso quoque habitu atque victu mandat, sacco et cineri incubare, corpus sordibus obscurare.—TERTULL. *De Pœnit.* c. 9. Totum

restricted to Ash Wednesday merely, when especially they were required.

4. The men were required to cut short their hair, and to shave their beards, in token of sorrow. The women were to appear with dishevelled hair, and wearing a peculiar kind of veil.<sup>2</sup>

5. During the whole term of penance, bathing, feasting, and sensual gratifications, allowable at other times, were prohibited. In the spirit of these regulations, marriage was also forbidden.<sup>3</sup>

6. Besides these restrictions and rules of a negative character, there were certain positive requirements with which the penitents were expected to comply.

(a) They were obliged to be present, and to perform their part at *every religious assembly*, whether public or private,—a regulation which neither believers nor catechumens were required to observe.<sup>4</sup>

(b) They were expected to abound in deeds of charity and benevolence, particularly in almsgiving to the poor.

(c) Especially were they to perform the duties of the *parabolani*, in giving attendance upon the sick, and in taking care of them. These offices of kindness they were expected particularly to bestow upon such as were affected with contagious diseases.

(d) It was also their duty to assist at the burial of the dead. The regulations last mentioned are supposed to have been peculiar to the church of Africa.<sup>5</sup>

These duties and regulations collectively, were sometimes included under the general term *ἑξομολόγησις*, *confession*. By this was understood not only *words*, but *works*; both, in connection, being the appropriate means of manifesting sorrow for sin, and the purpose of amendment.

#### § 6. OF THE READMISSION OF PENITENTS INTO THE CHURCH.

THE readmission of penitents into the church was the subject of frequent controversy with the early fathers, and ancient religious sects. Some contended that those who had once been excluded

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corpus incuria maceretur, cinere adpersum, et opertum cilicia.—AMBROS. *ad Virginem Lapsam* c. 8. Agite pœnitentiam plenam, dolentis ac lamentantis animi probate moestitiam. . . . Orare importet impensius, et rogare, diem luctu transigere, vigiliis noctes ac fletibus ducere, tempus omne lacrimosis lamentationibus occupare, stratos solo adhærere, in cinere et cilicio et sordibus volutari, post indumentum Christi perditum nullum jam velle vestitum, post diaboli cibum malle jejunium, justus operibus incumbere, quibus peccati purgantur, eleemosynis frequenter insistere, quibus a morte animæ liberantur.—CYPRIAN. *De Lapsis*.

from the church for their crimes, ought never again to be received to her fellowship and communion. But the church generally were disposed to exercise a more charitable and forgiving spirit.

The following general principles prevailed in the ancient church, in regard to the restoration of excommunicated members to their former standing.

1. There was no established term of time for the continuance of penance. The several grades each extended through three, seven, and even ten years; but the whole was varied according to circumstances, or at the discretion of the bishop.<sup>1</sup> The abuse and perversion of this privilege and prerogative of the bishop led the way to the sale of *indulgences* in the Roman Catholic church.

2. Sincere and unfeigned penitence was, alone, considered legitimate and satisfactory. It was called *pœnitentia legitima, plena, justa*, when attended, both in public and in private, with lamentations, and with tears, and every demonstration of sincere penitential sorrow for sin. This was regarded more than the amount of time spent, under the discipline of penance.<sup>2</sup>

3. In case of extreme sickness, and in prospect of death, the excommunicated person might be forgiven and restored by the bishop, or by a presbyter or deacon, by virtue of authority delegated to him for this purpose. But in case of the recovery of the sick person, the whole prescribed course of penitence was usually required of him.<sup>3</sup>

4. When one of the clergy fell under ecclesiastical censure he was forever incapacitated from returning to the discharge of his official duties, even though restored to the communion of the church. A layman also, who had once been the subject of discipline in the church, was ineligible to any clerical office.<sup>4</sup>

In regard to the mode of receiving again the returning penitent, it may be remarked,

1. That the restoration was not only a public act, but a part of public worship. For this public absolution the obvious reason was assigned, that the restitution made by the offender, was in this way made as public as the act of excommunication; and that the salutary influence of the discipline might be felt by the whole body of the church.

2. The same bishop, under whom the penitent had been excluded from the church, or his successor, was the only appropriate organ of restoring him to the fellowship of the church.<sup>5</sup> This rule was so strictly enforced that the bishop, who should violate it, was liable

to severe censure, or to be removed from office for the offence.<sup>6</sup> To prevent any mistake, the names of excommunicated persons were publicly enrolled, and a list of their names sent to the neighboring dioceses.<sup>7</sup> These regulations were severally observed in order that the church, who witnessed the offence, might also receive the full influence of the discipline with which it was visited.

3. The restoration usually took place on Passion week, which was from this circumstance denominated *hebdomas indulgentiæ*; or at some time appointed by the bishop. The transaction was performed *in the church*, when the people were assembled for religious worship; and for the most part immediately before the administration of the Lord's supper. The individual, kneeling before the bishop in the attitude and garb of a penitent, and before the altar, or the reading desk, (*the ambo*,) was readmitted by him with prayer and the imposition of hands.<sup>8</sup> The latter rite, especially, was regarded as the significant and principal token of admission to the communion of the church. The *chrism* was also administered to heretics, but to no other class of offenders.

4. No established form of absolution is recorded, but from analogy it might be presumed that some such was in use. Nothing like the modern method of absolving in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, was known to the ancient church.<sup>9</sup> The whole rite was frequently denominated *dare pacem*, from which it is fairly presumed, that some such phraseology was included in the form of absolution.

5. The fifty-first Psalm was usually sung on this occasion, but not as a necessary part of the service.<sup>10</sup>

6. The sacrament was immediately administered as a token that the penitent was reinstated in all his former privileges, the disqualification for the clerical office only excepted.

Such then were the solemnities by which penitents were restored to the privileges of the church. On the day appointed for their deliverance from this humiliating condition, they came into the church in a penitential garb of sackcloth, and with a trembling voice and copious tears, took their station on an elevated platform, where, in presence of the assembled congregation, they made a public confession of their sins, and throwing themselves down on the ground, they besought them to forgive the scandal and reproach they had brought on the Christian name, and to give them the benefit and comfort of their intercessory prayers. The brethren, moved with the liveliest emotions at beholding one in a situation so



distressing, one to whom they had often given the kiss of peace, fell on their knees along with him; and the minister, in the same attitude of prostration, laying his hands on the head of the penitent, supplicated, with solemn fervour, the divine compassion on him, and then raising him, placed him in the ranks of the faithful at the table of the communion.

### § 7. OF PRIVATE PENANCE.

ROMAN Catholic writers define public penance to be such as relates to notorious offences, and is performed only before the church; private penance relates to sins confessed only to a priest, for which satisfaction is privately performed. It is private penance, thus closely connected with the practice of auricular confession, which has been exalted to the rank of a sacrament in the church of Rome.

No precedent or other authority in favour of this practice can be found in the New Testament. James v. 16, relates to a *mutual* confession of sins, and demands no more confession of the people to a priest, than of a priest to the people. The Roman Catholics, abandoning this passage, contend, however, that auricular confession is founded on Scripture, inasmuch as it is a natural and necessary accompaniment of the power of forgiving sins, which they suppose to have been vested in the apostles, Matt. xviii. 18; xvi. 19; John xx. 23. Such is the position maintained by the Council of Trent, (Sess. xiv. c. 3-6 :) the unsoundness of which has been, however, abundantly proved.

The more acute and judicious controversialists on the Romish side, betake themselves to the authority of the fathers in this matter; claiming Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Tertullian, and others, as bearing witness to the existence of private confession in their days. But it is found, upon examination, that the *ἐξομολόγησις*, or confessio, to which they allude, is quite another thing—such, in fact, as has been already described; a point which is fully conceded by a celebrated Roman Catholic antiquarian, Gabriel Albaspinæus.<sup>1</sup> The truth is, that the ancient writers speak of *ἐξομολόγησις* only in the sense of confession of sin to Almighty God, or as denoting public penance; the whole exercise, in the latter case, being denominated from its introductory part. Concerning the former kind of confession, the fathers teach expressly that it is to be made only to God, and not by any means to man, whether to the whole church or to individual ministers.<sup>2</sup> It is wholly unconnected

with any thing in the shape of satisfaction or penalty ; its only necessary accompaniment being repentance or contrition, with purpose of amendment. The other kind of confession related, as has been already explained, to those open or notorious offences, on account of which a member of the church had been excluded from her communion ; and it was required as a preparatory step in order to a restoration to ecclesiastical privileges. And together with this, we may rank the public confession of previous sins which was required as one of the preliminaries of baptism ; allusion to which is made by some of the earliest ecclesiastical writers.

During the Decian persecution, the number of penitents being very large, the bishop deemed it expedient to appoint certain presbyters to the especial office of receiving their confessions preparatory to public penance ; it having been already recommended, as a wholesome practice, that persons suffering under any perplexities of mind or troubles of conscience, should have recourse to some wise and skilful pastor for their guidance and satisfaction. The appointment of these penitentiary priests may be regarded as having led the way to the institution of confessors, in the modern acceptance of the term. But those officers were by no means identical, and ought not to be confounded with each other. The office of the penitentiary priests "was not to receive private confessions in prejudice to the public discipline ; much less to grant absolution privately upon bare confession before any penance was performed, which was a practice altogether unknown to the ancient church ;—but it was to facilitate and promote the exercise of public discipline, by acquainting men what sins the laws of the church required to be expiated by public penance, and how they were to behave themselves in the performance of it ; and only to appoint private penance for such private crimes as were not proper to be brought upon the public stage, either for fear of doing harm to the penitent himself, or giving scandal to the church."<sup>3</sup> The confession of sins was indeed private ; but it was destined to be made public in order to the performance of penance. The private or auricular confession of later centuries is quite different from the confession made to those penitentiary presbyters. Confession was not made to them with a view of obtaining forgiveness from God, but in order to procure restoration to the former privileges of the offended church. It was considered, indeed, useful and necessary to seek for both kinds of forgiveness at the same time ; but no Christian minister claimed the power of pronouncing pardon in the name of God.<sup>4</sup>

The manner of conducting this private penance at Rome, and the scandalous abuse of it at Constantinople, which caused it to be discontinued in the Eastern church, is related by Sozomen.<sup>5</sup> It is a palpable illustration of the abuses to which the confessional of the Roman Catholic church may be perverted. "There is a place appropriated to the reception of penitents, where they stand and mourn until the completion of the solemn services, from which they are excluded; then they cast themselves, with groans and lamentations, prostrate on the ground. The bishop conducts the ceremony, sheds tears, and prostrates himself in like manner; and all the people burst into tears, and groan aloud. Afterward, the bishop rises from the ground, and raises up the others; he offers prayer on behalf of the penitents, and then dismisses them. Each of the penitents subjects himself in private to voluntary suffering, either by fastings, by abstaining from the bath, or from divers kinds of meats, or by other prescribed means, until a certain period appointed by the bishop. When this time arrives he is made free from the consequences of his sin, and is permitted to resume his place in the assemblies of the church. The Roman priests have carefully observed this custom from the beginning to the present time. At Constantinople, a presbyter was always appointed to preside over the penitents until a lady of illustrious birth made a deposition to the effect, that when she resorted as a penitent to the presbyter, to fast, and offer supplications to God, and tarried for that purpose in the church, a rape had been committed on her person by the deacon. Great displeasure was manifested by the people when this occurrence was made known to them, on account of the discredit that would result to the church, and the priests, in particular, were thereby greatly scandalized. Nectarius, after much hesitation as to what means ought to be adopted, deposed the deacon; and at the advice of certain persons, who urged the necessity of leaving each individual to examine himself before participating in the sacred mysteries, he abolished the office of the presbyter presiding over penance. From that period, therefore, the performance of penance fell into disuse."<sup>6</sup>

The regular establishment of the system of private confession and absolution is usually ascribed to Leo the Great, who represented not merely any particular penitentiary priests, but every priest, as possessing the power and authority to receive confession, to act as an intercessor with God on behalf of the penitent, and to declare forgiveness of sins in the name of God. But even the

system introduced by this pontiff differed from that which has prevailed since the thirteenth century in the Roman church, inasmuch as the confession of sins was left to every one's own conscience, and penance was still regarded as an entirely voluntary act, which no one could be compelled to perform; nor was the priest supposed to possess in himself any (delegated) power of forgiving sins. And subsequently to the age of Leo, it was considered as a matter quite at the option of an offender either to confess his sins to a priest or to God alone.

### § 8. OF ABSOLUTION.

No writer of the first three centuries of the Christian era makes mention of power or authority on the part of priest or bishop to forgive sin in the place of God. Tertullian, Cyprian, Chrysostom, and Ambrose, insist on the truth, that none but God alone can forgive sin; but Augustin, who survived the last two but a few years, asserts that the church has this power.\* Gregory the Great, † A. D. 604, fully claims for the bishops this high prerogative.† In the church of Rome, absolution was exalted to the rank of a sacrament, administered by a power delegated immediately from God.

The form of the absolution was at first in the strain of supplication. The offices of the priest were supposed to be those of an intercessor for the penitent. From this mediatorial office of intercessor, the transition was to that of vicegerent of God! A sinful man assumes to have received the awful prerogative of God himself to forgive at his will the sins of men. "*I absolve thee from all thy sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.*" Such was the form of absolution from the twelfth century.

Shocking as is this blasphemy, it seems to be only the natural result of that central error of prelacy, now so zealously propagated by a portion even of the protestant church—the *idea of a priesthood serving as a medium of connection between Christ and his church, through which the influences of the Holy Spirit are imparted to the church.* The apostolic succession, the grace of the sacraments, baptismal regeneration, the grace of confirmation by the laying on

\* Nec eos audiamus qui negant ecclesiam Dei omnia peccata posse dimittere.

† Mediator enim Dei et hominum, homo Jesus Christus, hanc *præpositis ecclesiæ* tradidit potestatem ut confitentibus actionem poenitentiae darent, et eosdem salubri satisfactione purgatos ad communionem sacramentorum per janua[m] reconciliationis admitterent.—*Ep.* 59, *al.* 46.



of hands of the bishop, the power of the keys to loose and to bind in heaven—these were the stages by which the Pope of Rome advanced to that culminating point of episcopal prerogatives, where he as God, sitteth in the temple of God, blasphemously dispensing at will absolution or hopeless perdition to a sinful creature like himself.

§ 9. DISCIPLINE OF THE CLERGY, AND THE PUNISHMENT OF DELINQUENTS.

THE stern and severe sanctity of the primitive Christians is peculiarly manifest in the severity of that discipline to which they subjected offending members of their communion. The rules of discipline in relation to the clergy are a part of the polity of the hierarchy.

The clergy, however, of every grade, were at first the subjects of a discipline peculiar to their body; and in some respects even more severe than that of private members of the church. The latter might, by suitable demonstrations of penitence, be again restored to their former standing; but this privilege was never accorded to a degraded or excommunicated minister. If, for any offence, he once fell under ecclesiastical censure, he was excluded from the clerical order entirely and for ever. But the higher orders soon found means of relieving themselves from the severity of this discipline, and of applying it to subjugate the inferior orders. The practical effect of this peculiar discipline, which, according to Planck, began in the fourth century, was to exalt the office of the bishop, and often to subject the other orders of the clergy to a humiliating degradation according to his whim or caprice. It was a crafty policy which completed the subjection of the clergy to the bishop.

The offences for which a clergyman was liable to censure or punishment were very numerous, and continually increased as the spirit of ancient Christianity degenerated and gave place to the ostentatious formalities of later times. They may, however, be comprised under the following classes: apostasy, heresy, simony, neglect of duty of any kind, especially departure from the prescribed forms of worship; and open immorality.

Many of these offences evidently related to the peculiar trials to which the primitive Christians were subject, and to the heresies and defections which were consequent upon them. Offences of this character were visited with peculiar severity upon the clergy.

The punishments inflicted upon offending members of the clerical body from the fourth to the seventh or eighth centuries, may be re-



duced to the following heads: suspension, degradation, exclusion from the communion, imprisonment, corporal punishment, and excommunication.

1. *Suspension*.—This related either to the salary of the clergyman or to his office. Both methods of punishment were practised by the ancient church. An instance is related in the writings of Cyprian of some whose monthly wages were suspended, while they were allowed to continue in the discharge of their office.

Suspension from office was varied according to circumstances. At one time the offender was suspended from the performance of the active duties of his office, while he still retained his clerical rank with his brethren in the ministry.<sup>1</sup> Decrees to this effect were ordained by the Councils of Nice, Ephesus, and Agde, in the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries. At another, he was forbidden to perform some of the duties of his office, while he continued in the discharge of others; and again, he was debarred the performance of all ministerial duties for a definite period of time.

2. *Degradation*.—This punishment consisted, as its name implies, in removing the offender from a higher to a lower grade of office. This sentence of degradation appears to have been final and irrevocable.<sup>2</sup> Bishops were in this manner transferred from a larger to a smaller or less important diocese.<sup>3</sup> Presbyters were degraded to the order of deacons; and deacons to that of subdeacons. This species of punishment was also inflicted upon bishops in Africa by superseding them in their expected succession to the office of archbishop or metropolitan.<sup>4</sup>

3. *Exclusion from the communion*.—Of this there were two kinds, which were denominated *communio peregrina*, and *communio laica*. The former has sometimes been confounded with the latter, or it has been supposed to denote a communion in one kind, or communion only at the point of death, which, in the Romish church, was regarded as a kind of passport to the future world. The most probable explanation of this point, confessedly obscure, is, that the term *communio* implied not only a participation of the eucharist, but in all the rights and privileges of a member of the church. Travellers and strangers, unless they had testimonials certifying to their regular standing in the church, were presumed to be under censure, and were not allowed the privileges of full communion, though permitted to receive, if need be, a maintenance from the funds of the church. An instance is related of Chrysostom, who on a certain occasion hospitably enter-

tained certain Egyptian monks who had fled from persecution to him at Constantinople; but they were not allowed to partake of the eucharist until it had been fully ascertained that no just accusation could be brought against them. Clergymen under censure were sometimes treated in this way in their own communion. They were placed in the same relations as strangers, which was denoted by the phrase *communio peregrina*.<sup>5</sup> Under these circumstances they could neither officiate nor be present at the celebration of the Lord's supper, until they had given the prescribed satisfaction.

The act of communion was indeed the highest privilege of a layman; but it was a severe rebuke to one who had been elevated to the rank of the clergy to be again degraded to the condition of a layman, and to be required to communicate *as a layman* at the table of the Lord. This was a kind of mitigated excommunication. He was excluded from the body of the clergy and reduced to the condition of a humble individual. In this situation he was required to perform certain services for that same body from which he had been expelled. This was styled *communio laica*, and the subject of this penalty was said to be delivered over to the secular arm, *curiæ tradi*, in the phraseology of the ancient canonists.

4. *Imprisonment*.—The custom of confining delinquent clergymen in monasteries appears to have taken its rise in the fourth and fifth centuries. At a later period it became a frequent mode of punishment.

5. *Corporal punishment*.—This kind of punishment, together with the last-mentioned, was inflicted only on clergy of the inferior orders.<sup>6</sup> This mode of punishment was by no means uncommon in the time of Augustin. A presbyter, who had given false witness, could first be deposed from his office; and then, as a layman, might be subjected to corporal punishment. Connected with the churches in large cities, such as Constantinople, there were houses of correction, *decanica*, for administering the correction of imprisonment and of corporal punishment.

6. *Excommunication*.—This was the last and highest form of ecclesiastical censure. It cut off all hope on the part of the offender from ever being again reinstated in the ministry, even if he were restored to the fellowship of the churches. None who had at any time been exposed to public censure, was restored again to his office.<sup>7</sup>

The above penalties appear to have been inflicted by authority of ecclesiastical councils alone, or at least to have been prescribed by them.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### OF COUNCILS.

#### § 1. THE ORIGIN OF COUNCILS.

THE apostolic churches were entirely independent of each other. Each individual church assumed the form of a little distinct republic or commonwealth; and, with regard to its internal concerns, was entirely regulated by a code of laws which may indeed have been derived from the apostles, but were received and sanctioned by the people constituting the church. But in the second century this primitive liberty and independence began to be relinquished and merged in a confederation of the churches of a province or country into a larger association, like the confederated republic of these United States, conventions being annually held by delegates from the several churches to consider and provide for the common interest and welfare of the whole. Whoever may have been the authors of this original confederation, it certainly had its origin in Greece. During the second century it extended into the confines of several of the Grecian states.

In process of time other provinces followed the example of Greece, until this form of government became general throughout the church. The conventions or assemblies held by delegates from the associated churches, to consult for the common welfare of the whole, were called by the Greeks *synods*, and the Latins, *councils*. The laws enacted by the deputies from the different churches in mutual council were called in the Greek language *canons*, which term was also adopted into the Latin language, and became the authorized nomenclature of the churches.

This view of the origin of councils is particularly confirmed by a passage from Tertullian on the observance of fasts appointed by authority of the bishops, which fasts were observed by the Montanists, but to which other Christians objected. Tertullian is defending the usage of the Montanists, in doing which he specifies the

powers of a bishop at this time, and asserts his right, on his own authority, to appoint fasts, as being a part of the religious services which were, by virtue of his office, under his direction. On certain emergencies he might also require special contributions from the churches, such as in those times of peril and persecution were frequently arising, and which could not be provided for by the ordinary and stated charities of the church. To such calls by their bishop, he says, the churches were accustomed promptly to respond.

In addition to all this, he urges that councils of the churches are accustomed to be held in Greece for consultation upon the common interests of the churches, and that the enactments of these councils are treated with the greatest respect, notwithstanding they were of merely human origin and authority.\*

From this accidental mention of the original formation of councils, several important conclusions may be derived :

1. They were appointed by merely human authority, and were regarded as being instituted neither by Christ nor by his apostles.
2. That at the close of the second century these councils were held neither in Assyria, nor in Egypt, nor in Rome, nor even in the Eastern churches generally, but solely in Greece and Asia Minor: *per Græcias*, that is in nations bearing the name of Greeks.
3. These councils had their origin in Greece, where the mutual relations and dependence of the Grecian republics evidently suggested the idea of a confederation of the churches. Indeed, it was little else than a modification of the celebrated Amphictyonic council, which was held "for the sole purpose of promoting harmony and celebrating common festivals; not from motives of foreign policy or party views."<sup>1</sup> This was called the common council of the Greeks, *τὸ κοινὸν τῶν Ἑλλήνων συνέδριον*. It was composed principally of deputies from the several states, who met, like the ecclesiastical councils, in the spring and autumn of each year, for mutual consultation.

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\* Aguntur præter ea per Græcias illa. certis in locis concilia ex universis ecclesiis, per quæ et altiora quæque in commune tractantur et ipsa representatio totius nominis Christiani magna celebratione veneratur. Et hoc quam dignum fide auspicante congregari undique ad Christum? Vide quam bonum et jucundum habitare fratres in unum! Hoc tu psallere non facile nosti, nisi quo tempore cum compluribus cœnas. Conventus autem isti stationibus prius et jejunationibus operari, dolere cum dolentibus et ita demum congaudere gaudentibus norunt.—*De Jejunis*, c. xiii.

4. "At this time, certain established places, or certain cities, were already assigned for these councils of the Greeks, out of which they could not be held.

5. "In these councils, not business of minor importance, concerning which each church determined according to their own discretion, but public business, greater or more important concerns, were treated of, &c.

6. "The bishops in these councils *represented their churches*; that is, they decreed and enacted, not in their own private name, but in the name of the churches whose delegates they were. 'There is a representation of the whole Christian name celebrated.' *Representatio totius nominis Christiani celebratur*. The whole Christian name here is evidently the whole church which bears the name of Christ. Therefore, bishops were supposed to represent the whole church, united together by covenant, and each one of them the church which he was placed over; whence arose the respect of which councils were thought worthy. The opinion, therefore, had not yet arisen which afterward prevailed, that the bishops, collected in councils, judged and sanctioned in the place of Jesus Christ, and were legislators and judges of the Christian people by the very nature of their office."

The information thus afforded by Tertullian respecting the origin of councils is supported by collateral history. No notice whatever is given of any earlier councils; but from Eusebius we learn that, about the close of the second century, the practice of holding such councils passed into Palestine and Syria.<sup>2</sup>

About the middle of the third century, Firmilian, bishop of Cæsarea, wrote to Cyprian an epistle in which he took occasion to say, that "the bishop and elders annually assembled to deliberate upon ecclesiastical matters committed to their charge, that the most important of these might be adjusted by mutual consultation,"<sup>3</sup> which confirms the account of Tertullian relative to this subject.

An ecclesiastical council may be defined to be a synod, composed of a number of representatives from several independent Christian communities, convened together to deliberate and decide upon matters relating to the welfare of the church.

These councils were popular deliberative assemblies, composed of representatives of independent churches from which they were sent.<sup>4</sup> In such communities, where all had severally a right to bear a part in such deliberations, the council must of necessity have been composed of representatives from each. It is impossible that all



could have convened collectively in council. But as the representatives of their respective churches, the bishops and presbyters would of course be chiefly selected. In this manner, what was at first done by common consent would also in time become an established usage and a right confirmed by common consent. Such being the state of things, the crafty bishops would easily have seen that, by constant and uniform attendance in council, they acquired increasing consideration and respect. Such councils being frequently held, the primate, or metropolitan bishop, would of course have the prerogative of convening and presiding over them.

The political form of government which prevailed in the Grecian states, no doubt had an influence in shaping the administration of their ecclesiastical affairs. The famous Council of the Amphictyons were accustomed to assemble semiannually from all the Grecian states. Something like this, we may easily suppose, would have obtained in the administration of their church government. In the absence of direct historical testimony to this effect, it is at least remarkable that both the Council of Nice, c. 5, and the Apostolical Canons, c. 38, direct that ecclesiastical councils be held semiannually, and at the same seasons of the year when the Amphictyonic council were wont to convene. The Council of Nice only conformed to the established usage in settling upon these stated seasons for the convening of their body. This circumstance shows, beyond doubt, the influence of political institutions in ecclesiastical affairs, which is confirmed by the letter of Firmilian.

These councils of the Grecian states must, for a considerable length of time, have been circumscribed within very narrow limits. But toward the beginning of the third century they began to be better known. The controversy between the Eastern and Western church relating to Easter, threw the whole Christian world, with the exception, perhaps, of Africa, into commotion, and brought them together in opposing councils. Such councils were now held at Cæsarea, or Ælia, and at Rome; in Pontus and France; in proconsular Asia, in Mesopotamia, and probably in Achaia. Within the third century, councils began also to be held in Africa; and although they do not seem to have acquired so regular a form as among the Greeks, yet their number was greater in this country than in any other, especially during the latter half of the century. The controversy concerning the baptism of heretics and the Novatian schism furnished them with abundant matter for discussion. Cyprian did not neglect to avail himself of means so well adapted

to enhance clerical influence and power, to which he was so much inclined. In Africa, therefore, they soon became frequent; and their members gradually losing sight of the representation of their churches, considered themselves as acting by virtue of their offices. And as the presiding presbyters had become bishops of the presbyters, who constituted the presbyteries of the respective congregations, so the metropolitans soon became moderators of the provincial synods; and the patriarchs, of general councils. That of Carthage, in the reign of Decius, was convened by Cyprian, A. D. 258, to consult on the propriety of rebaptizing those who had been baptized by heretics. There were eighty-four members, who all gave their own, and sometimes also the votes of others as proxies, and the details evince that they were considered the representatives of particular churches there named. Cyprian, when opening the business, described the assembly as *deliberative only*, and not as designed to pass a censure upon any individual. The fifth speaker observed, that all who came to his church from heretics he baptized, "and those from their clergy he placed among the laity." It has appeared from the works of Cyprian, that episcopacy was then parochial; consequently, the presbyters of a single church must have been the clergy here named.

But without pursuing the history of these councils further, we will confine our attention to the following inquiries relating to them:—1. What was the extent of their jurisdiction? 2. What was their peculiar organization? 3. Who were appropriately the constituent members of them?

## § 2. OF THE EXTENT OF THEIR JURISDICTION.

At first they were, without doubt, *provincial synods*. This conclusion is fully implied from the fact that nothing is said relating to this subject. Had their jurisdiction extended beyond the limits of their own provinces, it must have been mentioned. The synods of Asia Minor must be understood, therefore, to have been restricted to their own provincial limits; such as that of Hierapolis in Phrygia, which was chiefly inhabited by the Montanists. Those of Ancholus were probably limited in their jurisdiction to Thrace; but if not, they were only an exception to the prevailing custom. The councils which were held in many places respecting the controversy on the subject of Easter, were assuredly provincial synods. Such were also the synods which were held in Arabia in the third century, A. D. 243 and 246. The same is true also of the Synod of

Rome held by Cornelius in the year 251; and of the Synod of Antioch, A. D. 252, against the Novatians, and again at Rome, A. D. 260. Three provincial synods were also held at Antioch, from the year 264 to 269, against Paul of Samosata. Still, it is not to be presumed that all these were organized on precisely the same principles; the clergy from neighbouring provinces may have had a seat and a voice in some of them. Men of great weight of character, and whose counsels were highly respected, were particularly desired to attend from other places, and the convening of the council was at times delayed, in order to secure their attendance. Origen, in this capacity, though but a presbyter, attended the council in Arabia; and, by his learning and talents, settled the point in dispute to the satisfaction of the council. The bishops of Antioch also were so much embarrassed by the learning of Paul of Samosata, whom they would convict of heresy, that they invited for their aid the attendance of certain bishops from the Grecian provinces in Asia, including Palestine and Egypt. The metropolitan of Alexandria excused himself by reason of his great age;<sup>1</sup> but many bishops from those provinces attended the council—Firmilian from Cappadocia, Gregory and Athenodorus from Pontus, Helenus of Tarsus, Nicomas of Iconium; and the archbishops Hymenæus of Jerusalem, and Theotecnus of Cæsarea, together with the bishop Maximus from Arabia. Paul, however, by his talents withstood them all; and the council dispersed without gaining any advantage over him.<sup>2</sup> Foreigners, in like manner, attended both the second and third councils which were held for the same purpose. In the last council, a *presbyter*, Malchion, bore a conspicuous part, and was the principal agent in putting an end to the discussion.

About the same period of time other councils were held, which were sometimes more and at others less than provincial synods. The Council of Iconium, A. D. 235, consisted of bishops from Phrygia, Galatia, Cilicia, and other neighbouring provinces. Another council was also held in opposition to this in a neighbouring town, Synada, of which we know only that it had little or no influence against the first at Iconium. But this is sufficient to show that no established system of ecclesiastical jurisdiction at this time prevailed, even in the states of Greece, where such councils were first held.

In Africa, there was much less of system in these matters than in the Grecian states. Cyprian informs us that he thought it necessary to convene a council of many of the clergy, to deliberate

respecting the common good, in which council many topics were proposed and discussed. But he adds, "I am aware that some will never change their minds, nor give over a cherished purpose; but however harmonious their colleagues may be, they will persist in the support of their own peculiar views. Under these circumstances, it is not my business to attempt, by constraint, to give laws to any one; but, in the administration of the church, to leave every one to the freedom of his own choice, who must answer unto God for his conduct."<sup>3</sup>

The first ecclesiastical Council of Africa cannot be said to have been either provincial or general. Under Galba this country had been divided into *three* provinces. Constantine divided it into *six*. And yet it appears from Cyprian,<sup>4</sup> that the former division of Galba was still observed in the organization of the council, and that one even of these provinces was not represented; but for what reason does not appear. All, however, by common consent appear to have accorded to Cyprian, at Carthage, the right of convening a general council at his pleasure. This is the more probable from the fact, that in the year 255, several bishops, who apparently composed a provincial synod, appealed to him for the settlement of certain subjects of discussion among them.

The other councils in Africa were, for the most part, provincial in their character. Such was the council which was held before the time of Cyprian, the date of which is not distinctly known. So also were the councils held by Cyprian in the years 249, 251, 252, 255, and 256.

From all which it appears that most of the councils which were held in Africa were limited in their jurisdiction, and provincial in their character. Some, however, were of a more general character. At the end of the fourth century, such councils began to be held, which took the name of *plenary councils*. The councils generally of every country, like those of Greece and Africa, were provincial, and limited in their jurisdiction.

### § 3. OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCILS.

In general, the highest ecclesiastic within the province, whether bishop, metropolitan, or patriarch, presided in these councils. The popular character of these assemblies would indeed have permitted any one to be elevated to the office of moderator. But the gradations of the priesthood and the jealousy of the several orders were



such that none but he that was highest in official rank could have been placed in the chair to the mutual satisfaction of all classes. The presbyters would have claimed precedence of the deacons, the bishops of the presbyters; and so on, until none should be found to dispute the claim with the highest dignitary of the assembly. The greatest number of the members of the council would also come from the diocese of the highest functionary, which circumstance would give him the strongest party in the election. And there are many other ways in which this seat might have been secured to him.

As a natural consequence of the privilege attached to the office of president, and especially to the right of proposing or bringing forward the questions to be discussed, the views and opinions of the metropolitan obtained a predominance in the council; so that at length provincial synods became the mere organs of this dignity. Bishops and presbyters were too dependant on him to act with due independence. Councils were of consequence the great means of advancing the hierarchy.

The results or decrees of the councils were usually published in the name of the moderator. There are some instances in which the names of the attending bishops accompany the decree. Such, however, was not the usual custom. The metropolitans were jealous of their rights, and strove earnestly for a controlling influence in the councils. For the same reason they insisted that the result should be published under the sanction of their authority, and in their name. They usually had the address to cause their own opinions to prevail; and few had the independence to dispute them. Thus the metropolitan of Alexandria had the influence to cause his synod to banish Origen, A. D. 230. Cornelius effected the excommunication of three bishops at Rome, A. D. 251, in the same arbitrary manner. By such strides did the principal ecclesiastics advance their spiritual hierarchy; and so tamely did the subordinate members of their councils allow the most esteemed men in the church to suffer unjustly under this spiritual despotism! The councils became merely the organ of the metropolitan to execute his arbitrary decrees.

#### § 4. OF THE CONSTITUENT MEMBERS OF COUNCILS.

THE bishops early perceived that those councils would be one of the most efficient means of advancing the authority of the bishops, and of finally establishing their supremacy. It was ac-



cordingly their policy to concentrate in themselves the authority of synodical assemblies and general councils, and to exclude, not only the laity, but the deacons and presbyters. This policy finally prevailed, to the exclusion both of the laity and of the inferior orders of the clergy from all participation in the deliberations and decrees of councils, whether provincial or general. But the earliest councils were of a more popular character, in which presbyters, deacons, and laymen had a seat and an authoritative vote in common with bishops.

1. *The laity were originally constituent members of ecclesiastical councils.*—As representatives of the churches to which they belonged, they must be presumed to have a place in deliberative assemblies convened to consult and legislate on the interests of the churches. The right is in harmony both with the popular character of the primitive constitution of the church, and of the Amphictyonic councils of Greece, which were the model of the first ecclesiastical synods.

This presumptive argument is confirmed by historical evidence. About the middle of the third century, a council was held in Carthage respecting the baptism of heretics, in which bishops were convened from the neighbouring provinces of Africa, Numidia, and Mauritania, together with presbyters and deacons, and also a great multitude of the laity.\*

In the Council of Elvira, besides the bishops, twenty-six presbyters, and the deacons were present with the greater part of the people.† Eusebius relates that the faithful, οἱ πιστοί, held in Asia Minor frequent councils respecting the errors of Montanus, and, having examined these novel doctrines, pronounced them vain, rejected them as heresy, and expelled and prohibited from communion with the church those who held them.<sup>1</sup> “The faithful” is the common designation of the people of the church collectively, and, in the opinion of Böhmer, and many others, indicates the action of the laity in these deliberations and decisions.

Bishops, presbyters, deacons, and the *churches of God* united in the council which condemned Paul of Samosata.<sup>2</sup> The term *churches*, contradistinguished from the officers and pastors of the church, of necessity denotes the laity.

\* Adstantibus diaconibus et omni plebe.—*Conc. Eliber Præf.*

† Cum presbyteris et diaconibus, præsentē etiam plebis maxima parte.—Cyp. *Opp. De Hæret. Baptizand. Sent.* 87.

The presence of the laity is distinctly mentioned in a council held at Rome respecting those who under persecution had lapsed into idolatry. In a letter addressed by the presbyters and deacons to Cyprian, they state that a council was convened to treat of the case of the lapsed, which was composed of bishops, presbyters, confessors, and the laity who remained faithful to their vows. Such, in the phraseology of the times, were denominated *stantes laici*.\*

Even the general Council of Nice, the most famous on record, was attended by laymen. After stating that "the most eminent of the ministers of God in all the churches who have filled Europe, Africa, and Asia, were convened," the historian adds, "many of the laity were also present who were practised in the art of reasoning, and each prepared to advocate the cause of his own party."<sup>3</sup>

The fourth Council of Toledo, A. D. 633, minutely details the manner of convening a council and opening its debates. Among the constituent members it distinctly specifies *the laity*, in connection with bishops, presbyters, and deacons. It is added in the note below, as conclusive of the right of the laity to a seat and a vote in the councils of the church.†

Rheinwald contends that the *laity* had a right to vote in the early councils, and appeals to Cyprian, who says that many bishops were assembled in council from the provinces of Africa, Numidia, and Mauritania, with the presbyters and deacons, *a great part of the*

\* Quamquam nobis in tam ingenti negotio placeat, quod et tu ipse tractasti prius, ecclesiæ parem sustinendam, deinde sic collatione consiliorum cum episcopis presbyteris, diaconis, confessoribus, pariter ac *stantibus laicis* facta, lapsorum tractare rationem.—CYP. *Epist.* 31.

† Hora itaque diei prima ante solis ortum ejiciantur omnes ab ecclesia, obseratisque foribus cunctis ad unam januam, per quam sacerdotes ingredi oportet, ostiarii stent; et convenientes omnes episcopi pariter introeant et secundum ordinationis suæ tempus resideant. Post ingressum omnium episcoporum atque consessum vocentur deinde presbyteres, quos causa probaverit introire, nullus se inter eos ingerat diaconorum; post hos ingrediantur diacones probabiles, quos ordo proposcerit interesse, et corona facta de sedibus episcoporum presbyteres a tergo eorum resideant, diacones in conspectu episcoporum stent; deinde ingrediantur laici, qui electione concilii interesse meruerint; ingrediantur quoque et notarii, quos ad recitandum vel excipiendum ordo requirit; et obserentur januæ, sedentesque in diurno silentio sacerdotes et cor totum habentes ad deum, dicat archidiaconus: Orate; statimque omnes in terra prostrabuntur et orantes diutius tacite cum fletibus atque gemitibus, unus ex episcopis senioribus surgens orationem palam fundat ad dominum, cunctis adhuc in terra jacentibus. Finita autem oratione et responso ab omnibus: Amen, rursus dicat diaconus: Erigite vos; et confestim omnes surgant et cum omni timore Dei et disciplina tam epis-

*people being also present*, (præsente etiam plebis maxima parte.)<sup>4</sup> He also cites the preface of the Council of Illiberis, A. D. 305, in which the bishops are said to have delivered their sentiments while the twenty-six presbyters were sitting, and *the deacons and all the people* (the laity) *standing by them*. In both of these passages the mention made of the laity indicates that they acted as members of the councils. Böhmer also asserts the right of the laity to vote in council, and appeals to the same passage from Cyprian in proof. To which we may add the authority of Valesius, in his note upon Euseb. vii. 30. In proof of this he appeals to the acts of the Council of Carthage, and to the Council Illiberis.

Du Pin again, of the Romish church, fully accedes the laity this right. And Riddle, the learned historian of Oxford, asserts that the councils of the third century were "composed of bishops, presbyters, deacons, and laymen." The same is also asserted by Dr. Campbell, and again by Chancellor King.

2. *Presbyters and deacons were members of the early councils.* The presence and action of both has been already mentioned in the instances cited. It is indeed undeniable that *presbyters* were not unfrequently the most influential and important members of these councils. For evidence we have only to refer to the authority of Firmilian of Cappadocia, in the middle of the third century, and to Cyprian at Carthage.\* The *seniores*, as distinguished from the bishops, *præpositi*, were presbyters.

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copi quam presbyteres sedeant, sicque omnibus in suis locis in silentio consentibus diaconus alba indutus codicem canonum in medium proferens capitula de conciliis agendis pronuntiet, finitisque titulis metropolitanus episcopus concilium alloquatur dicens: Ecce, sanctissimi sacerdotes, recitatæ sunt ex canonibus priscorum patrum sententiæ de concilio celebrando; si qua igitur quempiam vestrum actio commovet, coram suis fratribus proponat. Tunc si aliquis quamcumque querelam quæ contra canones agit in audientiam sacerdotalem protulerit, non prius ad aliud transeat capitulum, nisi primum quæ proposita est actio terminetur; nam et si presbyter aliquis aut diaconis, clericus sive laicus de his qui foris steterint, concilium pro qualibet re credideret appellandum, ecclesiæ metropolitanæ archidiacono causum suam intimet, et ille concilio denuntiet; tunc illi et introeundi et proponendi licentia concedatur. Nullus autem episcoporum a cœtu communi secedat antequam hora, generalis secessionis adveniat; concilium quoque nullus solvere audeat nisi fuerint cuncta determinata, ita ut quæcumque deliberatione communi finiuntur episcoporum singulorum manibus subscribantur; tunc enim deus suorum sacerdotum interesse credendus est, si tumultu omni abjecto sollicitè atque tranquille ecclesiastica negotia terminentur.

\* Necessario apud nos fit, ut per singulos annos *seniores* et *præpositi* in unum conveniamus ad disponenda ea quæ curæ nostræ commissa sunt, ut, si quæ graviora sint communi consilio dirigantur.—CYP. *Epist.* 75.

To the same effect is also the instance of Origen in the Council of Arabia, to which allusion has already been made, and of Malchion at the Councils of Antioch against Paul of Samosata.

About the year 244, a council was convened in Bostra, in Arabia, on account of the heretical notions of one Beryllus, bishop of that place. This council, Origen, although a foreigner and only a *presbyter* under ecclesiastical censure, attended, by a special invitation from the bishops who composed the council; and such was his influence that he happily succeeded in convincing the bishop of his error, who not only retracted it, but gave thanks in writing to the learned stranger who had led him back to the truth. On a subsequent occasion, Origen was again called to attend a council in Arabia, over which he actually presided as *moderator*, in the presence of fourteen bishops.<sup>5</sup>

By far the most famous councils of the third century are the two that were held at Antioch against Paul of Samosata, A. D. 262 and 270. Eusebius specifies several of the most eminent bishops who attended the first council, and adds, "A great many more may be reckoned who, together with presbyters and deacons, were convened at the same time upon the same account."<sup>6</sup> At a second council, Malchion, a *presbyter*, 'most especially confuted and convinced him.' And moreover, for his surpassing sincerity in the faith of Christ, he was honoured with a presbytership of the church there."<sup>7</sup> The result of this council is published under the signature of sixteen persons, among whom Malchion, the presbyter, is particularly mentioned. These, together with all who were present from the neighbouring cities and villages—bishops, *presbyters*, and *deacons*—all concur in giving to the world their united decision. If this be not a "council proper," pray what is? It was a council duly convened, and attended by almost an "infinite number of bishops," *episcopi numero prope infiniti*. At the first council the attendance of bishops was invited from Cappadocia, from Pontus, from Iconium, from Jerusalem, from Arabia, and from Egypt. Hymenacus, from Jerusalem, presided at the second, and it is fairly to be presumed that, from this almost infinite number, many came from countries even more remote than in the first council. And yet Malchion, a *presbyter*, was the most influential member of that council. His name appears with that of the bishops in their public manifesto; and other presbyters and deacons united in making up the result of the council. Firmilian, the president of the first council, says that the bishops and presbyters (for so we must understand him by his *seniores et præpositi*)



annually assembled to deliberate upon ecclesiastical matters committed to their charge, that the most important of these might be adjusted by mutual consultation. Were not presbyters then "recognised as having a seat and a vote in these councils?"

That they had a seat, that they *took part in the deliberations* of councils, is undeniable. The fourth Council of Carthage, c. 23, expressly decreed that "no bishop should try any case in the absence of his clergy; and declared his decision null and void unless confirmed by them."<sup>8</sup> It is sometimes said that, though attending councils, presbyters and deacons did not vote; but what evidence have we to this effect? They are present, and take a part in the discussions, both of provincial and œcumenical or general councils. The decrees of councils are given under their names. A majority even of the councils both of Elvira and of Arles were presbyters. No decree of the bishop is valid without their sanction. They even preside in some instances over a council composed of bishops; and yet we are told that "none but the *prelates* were entitled to vote!" *Credat Judæus, Apella, non ego.*

Deacons were also present at the early councils, but it has been a matter of debate whether or not they were allowed to vote. They were often employed as secretaries and assistants of the bishops, and may have served them in this capacity in councils. But it would seem, from an instance recorded by Eusebius, that both presbyters and *deacons* were present in the early councils for the same general purpose as bishops. Speaking of the first council of Antioch against Paul, he says, "We might reckon up many others, (bishops,) together with *presbyters* and *deacons*, who then assembled in the said city concerning this matter; but the aforementioned were the most celebrated among them." What inducement had these presbyters and deacons to attend here, unless permitted to sit and to *vote* in the council? The narrative indicates that they had the same motives for attendance as those of the archbishops and bishops. We may also appeal to the Synod of Rome under Cornelius, A. D. 251, when both deacons and the laity were present.

In addition to the authorities of Siegel, Rheinwald, and Böhrmer, we may adduce the opinions of Planck, who asserts unqualifiedly that both presbyters and deacons took part in the provincial synods, and *voted* as members of the same.<sup>9</sup> D. W. L. C. Ziegler also asserts that there is the most undeniable evidence of the right of presbyters to sit and act in council, and expresses the confident opinion that *deacons* had the same rights. Athanasius



is declared on high authority to have been an active member of the Council of Nice while only a deacon. That this champion against Arianism was duly chosen and ordained to be the bishop of Alexandria, according to the customs of that church and the directions of the Council of Nice, whereof he had been an active member but five months before, there is no reason to question. That he had attended that council *as a deacon*, and, at the death of Alexander, was an archdeacon.

If further authority were necessary on this subject, it is found in Blondell, *Apologia*, p. 202 *et seq.*

The practical effect of these councils, from the beginning, was to give undue consideration and influence to the clergy; which continually increased, until it finally ended in the full establishment of the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

#### § 5. OF COUNCILS UNDER THE EMPERORS.

AFTER the conversion of Constantine, the councils of the church fell under the influence of the Byzantine emperors; and at a still later period, they submitted to the presidency and dictation of the bishop of Rome.

The celebrated Council of Nicæa, A. D. 325, is distinguished as having been the first which pronounced a decision respecting a speculative Christian doctrine, or article of religious faith; as well as the first over which a temporal prince presided. Hosius, the courtier of the emperor, was *in form* the president. But Constantine exercised a controlling influence over their deliberations, and *virtually presided*. He convened the council by his own authority. He opened the council in person with a public speech, in which he says, "When, contrary to all expectation, I had received information of your disagreement, I looked upon that thing as in nowise to be neglected."<sup>1</sup> The same author also informs us that, when a great controversy had arisen by reason of their mutual accusations, "the emperor with an intent mind received their proposed questions, and by degrees reduced those who pertinaciously opposed each other to a more sedate mind; inducing some to be of his opinion by the force of his arguments; wooing others by entreaties; praising others who spoke well; exciting all to an agreement, till at length he made them all of the same mind and opinion in relation to all matters concerning which they had before been disagreed."<sup>2</sup>

A *bishop*, we are told by Episcopal authority, filled "that honoured chair," nor did Constantine presume to take his seat

*“until requested by the bishops to do so.”* All this, however, was merely the etiquette of the time, and betokened no peculiar deference to the bishops. We have at least a fair illustration of the respect in which he held these dignitaries of the church, in his letter to the Synod of Tyre, soon after the Council of Nice. “If any person, which I don’t in the least expect, presuming at this juncture to violate our precept, shall refuse to be present, one shall be forthwith despatched from us, who, by an imperial order, shall drive that person into exile, and shall teach him that ’tis in no wise fit to resist the determinations of an emperor when published in defence of the truth.”<sup>3</sup> So much for the profound submission which Constantine yielded to episcopal authority! The controlling influence of the emperor over the Council of Nice is well expressed by Gibbon in the words following:—“The Nicene creed was ratified by Constantine; and his firm declaration that those who resisted the divine judgment of the synod must prepare themselves for an immediate exile, annihilated the murmurs of a feeble opposition, which, from seventeen, was almost instantly reduced to two.”

There were no general councils until the emperors became Christian. Constantine set the example; and, without invading the peculiar province of the ecclesiastic, presided in the Council of Nice, and probably prevented much discord.

It is also usually reckoned as the first general council; but it was, in fact, a council only of the oriental church; the Spanish bishop Hosius and two Roman presbyters were the only ecclesiastics from the Western Church. All the particulars respecting this remarkable and important council are given by the authors who are mentioned in the index of authorities.<sup>4</sup>

To the desired result the emperor brought the bishops by means of influences which none ever knew how better to use to his own advantage. He supported them at his own expense; he feasted them at his palace, and enriched them with princely presents; while the fearful bans of the church awaited any who should dare to dissent from the decisions of the council.

And yet the emperor had the audacity to claim for these decisions, so obtained, the authority of Divine inspiration, and “that judgment which God, who seeth all things, would approve!”<sup>5</sup> It was claimed, indeed, for the decrees of councils generally, that they were dictated by the Spirit of God, that they were of equal authority with the word of God; that they contained all that was essential to eternal life; and that to disregard them was to sin against the Holy Ghost.

The influence of them was to bring into neglect the word of God, to suppress the reading of the Scriptures, to deny the right of private judgment, to bind the conscience, to exalt the power of the bishops over the church; and, under the Christian emperors, to degrade them to the condition of mere sycophants of the civil rulers.

Thus the hierarchy withheld from the people the word of life, offering instead the creeds, the canons, and the decrees of their own councils.

We have been more minute in setting forth the influence of Constantine over the ecclesiastical councils, for the purpose of showing the interest which temporal princes manifested in the affairs of the church. The example of Constantine was imitated more or less by his successors to change essentially their political relations to the church, both in the Eastern and Western empire. It was indeed the commencement of the disastrous union of church and state—a union more pernicious in its consequences to the church than all the persecutions of the civil power under which she from the beginning had been bleeding. Socrates, the ancient historian of the church, indeed, assigns the same reason for interweaving with his fourth book the history of this emperor, “because all the affairs of the church depended upon his nod.” “By this interference of the emperor with these ecclesiastical councils,” says the sagacious Spittler, “and while the affairs of religion were treated as a concern of the state, these councils assumed a high political importance. The decrees of the provincial synods were authoritative only within their respective provinces; even the œcumenical councils would have never become general had they continued to be strictly ecclesiastical. They were not imperative even upon those who assented to their authority; so that the adherents of the bishops were still at liberty to dissent from them. But when the highest prelates of the realm were summoned by the emperor to convene in general council, and their authority became known, then the emperor began to claim the direction of them as his own institution. Whether their decisions should be obeyed or not was no longer a matter of indifference; for the concerns of religion became so intermingled with his interests that their decrees became the laws of the church. The arm of the civil authority accordingly fell heavily upon them who refused to listen to the voice of their spiritual fathers. This is the date of that disastrous hour when the decrees of a few hundred bishops, enforced by the severest threats of the emperor, became the rule of faith and of

conduct to all christendom.”<sup>6</sup> The degeneracy of the church and the corruption of religion which followed so soon, were only the legitimate consequences of the ecclesiastical polity which was legalized under Constantine. It was the final overthrow of the primitive simplicity and purity which had hitherto prevailed.

The various influences of these early synods in overthrowing the primitive constitution of the church are clearly sketched by Mosheim, who remarks that “these councils were productive of so great an alteration in the general state of the church as nearly to effect the entire subversion of its ancient constitution. For, in the first place, the primitive rights of the people, in consequence of this new arrangement of things, experienced a considerable diminution, inasmuch as thenceforward none but affairs of comparatively trifling importance were ever made the subject of popular deliberation and adjustment;—the councils of the associated churches assuming to themselves the right of discussing and regulating every thing of moment or importance; as well as of determining all questions to which any sort of weight was attached. In the next place, the dignity and authority of the bishops were very much augmented and enlarged. In the infancy, indeed, of the councils, the bishops did not scruple to acknowledge that they appeared there merely as the ministers or legates of their respective churches; and that they were in fact nothing more than representatives acting under instructions. But it was not long before this humble language began by little and little to be exchanged for a loftier tone; and they, at length, took it upon them to assert that they were the legitimate successors of the apostles themselves, and might, consequently, by their own proper authority, dictate to the Christian flock. To what extent the inconveniences and evils arising out of these preposterous pretensions reached in after times, is too well known to require any particular notice in this place.”

Many examples of the abuse of prerogatives and of power by the bishops, and of their shameful strife for preferment, as they gained the ascendancy in these councils, might be drawn from ancient history. But let one authority suffice. It is that of a great and good bishop of the fourth century, who still retained much of the piety and unpretending simplicity of other days. On being summoned to the Council of Constantinople, A. D. 381, he addressed a letter to Procopius declining his attendance:—“How I wish there had been no precedence, no priority of place, no authoritative dictatorship, that we might be distinguished by virtue

alone. But now this right hand, and left hand, and middle, and higher and lower, this going before and going in company, have produced to us much unprofitable affliction; brought many into a snare, and thrust them out among the herd of the goats; and these, not only of the inferior order, but even of the shepherds, who, though masters in Israel, have not known these things." . . . "I am worn out—with contending against the envy of the holy bishops; disturbing the public peace by their contentions, and subordinating the Christian faith to their own private interests." . . . "If I must write the whole truth, I am determined to absent myself from all assemblies of the bishops; for I have never seen a happy result of any councils, nor any that did not occasion an increase of evils, rather than a reformation of them, by reason of these pertinacious contentions, and this vehement thirst for power, such as no words can express."

Of the bishops of the Council of Constantinople he says—"These conveyers of the Holy Ghost, these preachers of peace to all men, grew bitterly outrageous and clamorous against one another; in the midst of the church-meetings accusing each other and leaping about as if they had been mad, under the furious impulse of a lust of power and dominion, as though they would have rent the world in pieces." He is also almost equally severe upon the unprincipled ambition and shameful conduct of the clergy at the Council of Nice, A. D. 425. The pride, venality, and corruption of these ministers of the gospel continued to increase, until pure and undefiled religion ceased almost from the ministry and from the church. Then primitive Christianity, wearied at length with the vain pomp of power, and in disgust at the bigotry, venality, and corruption which disgraced her name, retired from the gaze of men to the secluded cloister, drew the curtains, and sank into repose through a long, dark night of barbarism and superstition, until the dawn of a better day in the Reformation.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

### MARRIAGE.

#### § 1. OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE.

THE laws of Christian marriage seem, at first view, to be derived from the Mosaic regulations on this subject, and yet it is remarkable that, until the sixth or seventh century, the marriages of the early Christians were regulated rather by the Roman than by the Mosaic laws. But all this was only the natural result of the peculiar circumstances under which the Christian community was formed. Converts from the Jews might be expected to adhere to the Jewish rites, while those from the Gentiles would conform to the Roman laws and customs. For this reason the marriage rites of the Christian church were of a mixed character, in which the influence of the Roman law was, at first, predominant. By this law, as well as by the law of Christ, polygamy was strictly forbidden.<sup>1</sup> In many other respects, it was also so far conformed to the law of God, that many of the early fathers scrupled not to borrow from it some of the most important marriage ceremonies. They objected to the adoption of heathen customs, in this respect, only so far as they militated against the spirit of Christianity.<sup>2</sup>

Much controversy prevailed in the ancient church on the subject of *second* marriages, particularly with the Novatians and Montanists, who denounced such marriages as unlawful. This opinion was also upheld by many councils.<sup>3</sup> A concession in favour of second marriages was afterward made to the laity, but refused to the clergy.<sup>4</sup> The law of celibacy finally rendered this rule nugatory with respect to the priesthood.

The state claimed the right of regulating the laws of marriage; the church at the same time possessing a subordinate or concurrent jurisdiction. This concurrence, however, was chiefly of a negative and passive character, and was the occasion of continual discord between church and state. For the first five centuries the church had no further concern with the laws of marriage than to

*censure* them, as occasion required, and to restrict the observance of them, by her discipline and authority. The laws of the state and the regulations of the church, on this subject, were first made to harmonize under the emperor Justinian. By making the sacerdotal benediction an essential part of the marriage covenant, and by exalting this covenant to the dignity of a sacrament, the clergy found the means of magnifying their office and increasing their authority over the people. Under the dynasty of Charles, the sanction of the church was fully established, while the law still originated with the state.<sup>5</sup> In the Middle Ages, from the tenth to the sixteenth centuries, the church possessed a preponderating influence in these matters; but even then, her claim to an exclusive jurisdiction was neither asserted nor allowed. To assert this prerogative was regarded as a direct attack upon the state.<sup>6</sup> In Protestant states it is regarded as a civil institution, established in conformity with the law of God, and appropriately solemnized by the rites of religion.

The regulations in relation to *prohibited marriages* were, in the lapse of time, gradually assimilated to the law of Moses; but these have never been strictly observed in the Christian church. The canonists have very carefully specified the several degrees of consanguinity and affinity within which marriage could not lawfully be contracted. They were thirteen in number, while under the Mosaic economy they were seventeen, or, according to others, nineteen. The prohibited grades, in the ancient church, are comprised in the following lines:

Nata, soror, neptis, matertera fratris et uxor  
 Et patruī conjux, mater privigni, noverca  
 Uxorisque soror, privigni nata, nurusque  
 Atque soror patris; conjungi lege vetantur.

Whether it is lawful to marry a brother's wife, or a wife's sister, was a question much controverted in the church. The general sense of the church was against such connections, as appears from the dispensation which was made in such cases in favour of the clergy. This point has been discussed at length by Schlegel.<sup>7</sup>

Mixed marriages between the Jews and Gentiles were strictly prohibited by the law of Moses. This prohibition is not repeated in the New Testament in regard to the marriage of Christians with idolaters. The apostle Paul, however, decidedly objects to such connections, as inexpedient. 1 Cor. vii; 2 Cor. vi. 14-18. The early fathers denounced them as dangerous and immoral;<sup>8</sup> and they were, at a later period, positively prohibited by the decrees

of councils and the laws of the empire.<sup>9</sup> By these regulations it was unlawful for Christians to marry either Jews, pagans, Moham-medans, or heretics.<sup>10</sup> If, however, such marriages had already been contracted, they appear not to have been annulled upon the conversion of either party to Christianity. There are, indeed, examples of the violation of these rules, as in the case of Monica, the mother of Augustin, and Clotildis, the wife of Clovis, both of whom were instrumental in the conversion of their husbands.<sup>11</sup>

## § 2. OF DIVORCE.

ON this subject it is sufficient to say that the church, with few exceptions, has uniformly adhered to the rules laid down by our Lord and his apostles. Mark x. 2, 12; Luke xvi. 18; Matt. v. 31, 32; xix. 2, 10; 1 Cor. vii. 10, 11; Rom. vii. 2, 3. But under the term adultery the primitive church included idolatry and apostasy from the Christian faith,<sup>1</sup> to which may be added witchcraft and other magical arts. The laws of Constantine, Honorius, Theodosius the Younger, Valentinian the Third, Anastasius, and Justinian, also favour this construction.<sup>2</sup> The canonists enumerated twelve causes of divorce, including those which were also regarded as suitable reasons for not assuming the marriage vow. The same causes which are a bar to assuming the marriage covenant dissolve it. These causes are set forth in the following lines:

Error, conditio, votum, cognatio, crimen,  
Cultus disparitas, vis, ordo, ligamen, honestas,  
Si sis adfinis; si forte coire nequibis (al negabis).

The *error* relates to a mistake in regard to the parties, as in the case of Leah and Rachel, *conditio* to the marriage of freemen with those who are in bondage, *cognatio* to prohibit degrees of consanguinity, *votum* and *ordo* relate to the marriage of monastics, *ligamen* to cases of bigamy, *honestas* to prohibited connections between persons already related by marriage.

## § 3. OF THE CELIBACY OF THE CLERGY.

THE celibacy of the clergy was not required in the first three centuries of the Christian era. Objections were indeed early made to those who had married a second wife, based on a misconstruction of the qualification required by Paul, "the husband of one wife," as though it related to several marriages, and not to

polygamy.\* But it appears from the instance of Novatus in the church of Africa, and from other authorities, that the clergy of these provinces, in the middle of the third century, were not bound by the law of celibacy;<sup>1</sup> and Socrates had known many bishops in the East who had “had children by their lawful wives during their episcopate.”<sup>2</sup> Such instances, however, after the fourth century, are to be regarded rather as exceptions to the general rule, which was that of celibacy, or of abstinence from the rights of the marriage relation if the bishop had entered into these bonds previous to his consecration.† The duty of such abstinence was urged in the Council of Nice, A. D. 325, in regard to bishops, presbyters, and deacons, but, through the influence of Paphnutius, was finally left to the discretion of each.<sup>3</sup>

Down to the close of the seventh century the law of celibacy was not fully established, nor indeed until the age of the famous Hildebrand, in the eleventh century, though it had been for several centuries a prevailing usage, when Hildebrand, A. D. 1074, made it obligatory upon the clergy throughout the papal dominions.

#### § 4. OF MARRIAGE RITES AND CEREMONIES.

It was a rule of the primitive church that the parties who were about to be united in marriage, both male and female, should signify their intentions to their pastor, that the connection might be formed with his approbation. The church were expected, in this manner, not only to take cognisance of the proposed marriage, but to determine whether it was duly authorized by the principles of the Christian religion. The marriage was indeed valid *in law* without this ecclesiastical sanction; but it was open to censure from the church, and was followed by the imposition of penance or the sentence of excommunication.‡

\* Quot digami præsident apud vos, insultantes utique apostolo.—TERTULL. *De Monogam.* c. iii. Comp. Apost. Const. iii. 2.

† Placuit in totum prohibere episcopis, presbyteris et diaconibus, vel omnibus clericis positus in ministerio, abstinere se a conjugibus suis et non generare filios; quicumque vero fecerit ab honore clericatus exterminatur.—*Conc. Elib.* c. iii. A. D. 306.

‡ Πρέπει δὲ τοῖς γαμοῦσι καὶ ταῖς γαμούσαις μετὰ γνώμης τοῦ ἐπισκόπου τὴν ἑωσὺν ποιῆσθαι, ἵνα ὁ γάμος ᾗ κατὰ Κύριον, καὶ μὴ κατ' ἐπιθυμίαν.—IGNAT. *Ep. ad Polycarp.* ii. 5. Unde sufficiamus ad enarrandam felicitatem ejus matrimonii, quod ecclesia conciliat, et confirmat oblatio, et obsignat benedictio, Angeli renuntiant, pater rato habet? Nam nec in terris filii sine consensu patrum rite et juste nubent.—TERTULL. *ad. Uxor.* lib. ii. c. 8, 9. Occultæ conjunctiones, id est, non prius apud ecclesiam professæ, juxta mœchiam et fornicationem judicari periclitantur.—TERTULL. *De Pudicit.* c. 4.

This notice originally answered the purpose of a public proclamation in the church. No satisfactory indication of the modern custom of publishing the banns appears in the history of the church until the twelfth century, when it was required by the authority of ecclesiastical councils.<sup>1</sup> According to the rules of the Romish church, this publishment should be made on three market-days. In some countries, the banns were published three times; in others, twice; and in others, once. The intentions of marriage were sometimes posted upon the doors or other parts of the church; sometimes published at the close of the sermon or before singing. The word *banns*, according to Du Cange, means a public notice or proclamation.

It is worthy of notice that no distinct account of the mode of solemnizing marriage, nor any prescribed form for this purpose, is found in any of the early ecclesiastical writers, although they have many allusions to particular marriage rites and ceremonies. It appears that the propriety or necessity of religious exercises in solemnizing the marriage covenant was not recognised by the *civil law* until the ninth century; but that such religious rites were required by *the church* as early as the second century.\*

The rites of marriage in the ancient Greek church were essentially three: the sponsalia—the *espousals*, the investing with a crown, and the laying off of the crown.

1. The ceremony of *the espousals* was as follows:—The priest, after crossing himself three times upon the breast, presents the bridal pair, standing in the body of the house, each with a lighted wax candle, and then proceeds to the altar, where he offers incense from a cruciformed censer, after which the larger collect is sung with the responses and doxologies.

Then follows the ceremony of presenting the ring. With a golden ring the priest makes a sign of the cross upon the head of the bridegroom, and then places it upon a finger of his right hand, thrice repeating these words: “This servant of the Lord espouses this handmaid of the Lord, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, both now and for ever, world without end, Amen.” In like manner, and with the same form of words,

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\* Cum ipsum conjugium velamine sacerdotali et benedictione sanctificari oporteat, quomodo potest conjugium dici ubi non est fidei concordia?—AMBROS. *Ep.* 70. Etiam si nostræ absolutæ sit potestatis quamlibet puellam in conjugium tradere, tradi a nobis Christianam nisi Christiano non posse.—AUGUST. *Ep.* 234, ad Rusticum. Δέον—ιερέας καλεῖν, καὶ δι' εὐχῶν εὐλογεῖν τὴν ὁμόνοιαν τοῦ συνοικεῖν συσφίγγειν κ. τ. λ.



he presents the bride a silver ring. The groomsmen then change the rings, while the priest, in a long prayer, sets forth the import of the rings. After which the whole is closed with a prescribed form of prayer. These espousals usually took place some time previous to the consummation of the marriage. According to some authorities, two years usually intervened between the espousals and the marriage.

2. *The act of crowning the parties* became, in process of time, the initiatory rite in solemnizing the marriage covenant. But this was strenuously denounced by Tertullian as a corrupt imitation of heathen rites, as in truth it was. It is only one among a multitude of instances of the blending of Christianity with paganism. The same remark applies to the vailing of the bride.<sup>2</sup> The preliminaries of the rite of crowning were the same as those of the espousals, with the exception that in this instance the 128th Psalm was sung with the responses and doxologies. After this a discourse was delivered setting forth the importance and responsibilities of the marriage relation. Then various interrogations, relating to the marriage covenant and the unmarried state, were presented: next followed the larger collects, varied according to circumstances; after which a long prayer was offered, in three parts, each of which was announced in the customary form by the deacon, τοῦ κυρίου δεήσμεν. After this, the priest sets the nuptial crown, which has been lying on the altar, first upon the head of the bridegroom, and then upon that of the bride, saying, "This servant of the Lord hereby crowns this handmaid of the Lord, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, world without end, Amen." This ceremony is followed by prayers, doxologies, and the reading of the Scriptures, particularly Eph. v. 20-33 and John ii. 1-11, and by the alternate prayers of the priest and the deacon. The whole is concluded by the assembly repeating the Lord's prayer with the customary responses, and the usual form of benediction.

During these solemnities the priest presents to the newly-married couple a glass of wine, of which each drinks three times, and then the glass is immediately broken, to denote the transitory nature of all earthly things.

The minister then joins the hands of the parties and leads them three times around in a circle, while the whole assembly unite in singing a nuptial song, the groomsmen meanwhile accompanying the married couple with his hands resting upon their heads, which are still adorned with the crown.

3. *The laying off of the crown.*—Upon the eighth day the married pair present themselves again in the church, when the minister, with appropriate prayer, lays off the nuptial crown, and dismisses them with his benediction, offered in a prescribed form of words. This ceremony, however, was not uniformly observed.

In all these rites the reader will observe a studied analogy to those of baptism.

The second and third marriage was solemnized in much the same manner, the ceremonies being abridged, and the prayer of penance substituted in the place of the nuptial prayer. The church thus treated these as just occasions for discipline, and refused altogether to sanction a fourth marriage, but regarded it as a criminal offence.

The marriage ceremonies in the Western church are given in detail by Bingham, of which the following account is a brief summary.

When persons, against whom there lay no lawful impediment, were disposed to join in matrimony with each other, they were obliged to go through certain preliminaries appointed by custom or law, before they could ordinarily complete the marriage. These went by the general name of *sponsalia*, espousals or betrothing; and they consisted chiefly in a mutual contract or agreement between the parties concerning their future marriage, to be performed within a certain limited time; which contract was performed by certain gifts or donations, called *arrhæ et arrhabones*, the *earnest of marriage*; as also by a ring, a kiss, a dowry, a writing or instrument of dowry, with a sufficient number of witnesses to attest it.

The free consent of parties contracting marriage was declared necessary by an old Roman law, (*Lex Papia et Julia*,) which was confirmed by Diocletian, and inserted by Justinian into his code. No espousal could stand firm but such as was voluntarily agreed upon by the free consent of each contracting party, without any force or violence of any kind intervening to compel them.

When the contract was thus made, it was usual for the man to bestow certain gifts upon the woman, as tokens and pledges of the espousal; and sometimes, but not so commonly, the woman made presents to the man upon the same account. These are sometimes called *sponsalia*, espousals, and sometimes *sponsalitiæ donationes*, espousal gifts, or *arrhæ*, and *dignora*, earnest or pledges of future marriage; because the giving and receiving of them was a confirmation of the contract, and an obligation on the parties to take each other for man and wife, unless some legal reason gave them liberty to do otherwise. To make these donations more firm and sure, it was

required that they should be entered into public acts, and set upon record.

Together with these espousal gifts, or as a part of them, it was usual for the man to give the woman a ring, as a further token of and testimony of the contract. This was an innocent ceremony, used by the Romans before the time of Christianity, and in some measure admitted by the Jews, whence it was adopted among the Christian rites of espousal. But it does not appear that the ring was originally used in the solemnity of marriage itself.

Another ceremony, used in espousals sometimes, was a solemn kiss, which the man gave to the woman, in confirmation of the contract; which was an ancient rite used by the heathen, together with joining of hands, in their espousals. (TERTULL. *de Veland. Virg.* c. 11.)

These ceremonies, being innocent in themselves, seem to have been adopted by Christians, with other such customs, into their espousals, who never rejected any innocent rites because they had been used by heathens, except such as naturally tended to defile them with some unavoidable stain of idolatry or superstition.

Another part of the espousals was the husband's settling a dowry upon the woman, to which she should be entitled after his death—a stipulation commonly made in writing, or with public instruments under hand and seal.

To make the business of espousals not only the more solemn, but also the more firm and sure, it was usual to transact the whole affair before chosen witnesses, the friends of each party.<sup>3</sup>

#### § 5. REMARKS UPON THE MARRIAGE RITES AND CEREMONIES OF THE ANCIENT CHURCH.

In the works of early ecclesiastical writers, especially in those of Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Augustin, Jerome, Basil, and Chrysostom, we find many allusions to particular rites and ceremonies, but no entire or general account of them. In the former part of the seventh century a writer attempted to enumerate the marriage ceremonies which the church had recognised as innocent and convenient, or symbolical.<sup>1</sup> We possess also an official account of the ceremonies used in the Roman church, A. D. 860, from the pen of Pope Nicholas I.\*

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\* *Morem quem sancta Romana suscepit antiquitus et hactenus in hujusmodi conjunctionibus tenet ecclesia, vobis monstrare studebimus. Nostrates siquidem tam mares quam feminæ non ligaturam auream, vel argenteam, aut ex quolibet*

To proceed, however, with our general remarks:—1. The office of groomsmen, or attendant of the bridegroom, is of high antiquity; common alike to the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans. He is designated by the names *παράνυμφος*, *νυμφαγωγός*, *νυμφευτής*, etc. He had various duties to perform in connection with the nuptial contract and dowry, such as the following:—To accompany the parties to the church at their marriage—to act as sponsor for them in their vows—to assist in the marriage ceremonies—to accompany them to the house of the bridegroom—to preside over and direct the festivities of the occasion, etc.<sup>2</sup>

2. The use of the ring in the rites both of espousal and of marriage is very ancient. It is mentioned both by Tertullian<sup>3</sup> and Clement of Alexandria;<sup>4</sup> the latter of whom says—"It was given her, not as an ornament, but as a seal, to signify the woman's duty in preserving the goods of her husband, because the care of the house belongs to her." Isidorus Hispalensis says, "that it was presented by the husband, either as a pledge of mutual affection, or rather as a token of the union of their hearts in love."<sup>5</sup>

3. The crowning of the married pair with garlands was a marriage rite peculiar to many nations professing different forms of religion. Tertullian inveighs against it with all the zeal of a gloomy Montanist;<sup>6</sup> but it is spoken of with approbation by the fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries, from whom it appears that the friends

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metallo compositam, quando nuptialia fœdera contrahunt, in capite deferunt. Sed post sponsalia, quæ futurarum sunt nuptiarum promissa fœdera, quæcunque consensu eorum, qui hæc contrahunt, et eorum, in quorum potestate sunt, celebrantur, et postquam arrhis sponsam sibi sponsus per digitum fidei a se annulo insignitum desponderit, dotemque utrique placitam sponsus ei cum scripto pactum hoc continente coram invitatis ab utroque parte tradiderit; aut mox, aut apto tempore, ne videlicet ante tempus lege definitum tale quid fieri præsumatur, ambo ad nuptialia fœdera perducuntur. Et primum in ecclesia Domini cum oblationibus, quas offerre debent Deo per sacerdotis manum, statuuntur, sicque demum benedictionem et velamen cœleste suscipiunt. . . . Verumtamen velamen illud non suscipit, qui ad secundas nuptias migrat. Post hæc autem de ecclesia egressi coronas in capitibus gestant quæ in ecclesia ipsa sunt solitæ reservari. Et ita festis nuptialibus celebratis ad ducendam individuum vitam Domino disponente de cetero diriguntur. . . . Tanta solet arctare quosdam rerum inopia, ut ad hæc præparanda nullum his suffragetur auxilium: ac per hoc sufficiat, secundum leges, solus eorum consensus, de quorum conjunctionibus agitur. Qui consensus, si solus in nuptiis forte defuerit, cetera omnia etiam cum ipso coitu celebrata frustantur. . . . Hæc sunt præter alia, quæ ad memoriam non occurrunt, pacta conjugiorum solemnia. Peccatum autem esse, si hæc cuncta in nuptiali fœdere non interveniant, non dicimus, quemadmodum Græcos vos adstruere dicitis.—NICOL. I. *Respons. ad Consulta Bulgar.* c. 3.



and attendants of the bridal pair were adorned in the same manner.<sup>7</sup> These chaplets were usually made of myrtle, olive, amaranth, rosemary, and evergreens, intermingled with cypress and vervain. The *crown*, appropriately so called, was made of olive, myrtle, and rosemary, variegated with flowers, and sometimes with gold and silver, pearls, precious stones, etc. These crowns were constructed in the form of a pyramid, or tower.

Both the bride and the bridegroom were crowned in this manner, together with the groomsman and the bridesmaid. The bride frequently appeared in church thus attired on the day when proclamation of the banns was made.

Chaplets were not worn by the parties in case of second marriage, nor by those who had been guilty of impropriety before marriage.

In the Greek church, the chaplets were imposed by the officiating minister at the altar. In the Western church it was customary for the parties to present themselves thus attired.

4. The wearing of the veil by the bride was borrowed from the Romans.\* It was also conformable to the example of Rebekah, Gen. xxiv. The veil was supposed to be emblematical of the retirement and privacy of domestic life into which the bride was now to retire.

From this marriage rite arose the custom of *taking the veil* in the Catholic church. By this act the nun devotes herself to perpetual virginity as the spouse of Christ, the Bridegroom of the church.

5. It appears to have been customary also to spread a robe over the bridegroom and bride,<sup>8</sup> called *vitta nuptialis*, *pallium jugale*, etc., and made of a mixture of white and red colours.†

6. Torches and lamps were in use on such occasions both among the Jews and pagan nations.<sup>9</sup> No mention is made of them in the

\* TERTULL. *De Veland. Virg.* lib. xvii. c. 11. The velamen nuptiale, of which Ambrose (*Ep.* 70) says, "Conjugium velamine sacerdotali sanctificari oportet," is usually regarded as "signum pudoris et verecundiæ." According to Isidor. Hispal. (*De Off. Eccl.* ii. c. 19,) it is rather "signum humilitatis et subjectionis erga maritum." He says, "Feminæ, dum maritantur, velantur, ut noverint per hoc se viris esse subjectas et humiles."

† Quod nubentes post benedictionem vitta invicem quasi uno vinculo copulantur, videlicet ideo fit, ne compagem conjugalis unitatis disrumpant. Ac eadem vitta candido purpureoque colore permiscetur; candor quippe est ad munditiem vitæ, purpura ad sanguinis posteritatem adhibetur, ut hoc signo et continentia et lex continendi ab utrisque ad tempus admoneantur, et post hoc reddendum debitum non negetur.—ISIDOR. *Hispal. de Off. Eccl.* lib. ii. c. 19.



church previous to the time of Constantine, though they may have been in use at an earlier date.

7. All the marriage rites and ceremonies indicate that the day was observed as a festive occasion, while measures were carefully taken to guard against all excesses and improprieties of conduct. These festivities were celebrated by nuptial processions, going out to meet the bridegroom and conducting him home—by nuptial songs, and music,<sup>10</sup> and marriage feasts. These festivals are frequently the subject of bitter animadversion by the fathers, especially by Chrysostom,<sup>11</sup> and often called for the interposition of the authority of the church. It appears, however, that the efforts of the church were not to abolish these convivial entertainments and festivities, but to restrain them within the bounds of decency and good order.<sup>12</sup> The clergy were expected to refrain from attending them.<sup>\*13</sup>

8. In connection with these festivities, it was customary to distribute alms to the poor; and, instead of the old Roman custom of scattering about nuts, to throw out pieces of money to the children and to the poor.

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\* Presbyteri, diaconi, sub-diaconi vel deinceps, quibus ducendi uxores licentia modo non est etiam aliarum nuptiarum evitent convivia, nec his cœtibus miscantur ubi amatoria canuntur et turpia, aut obsceni motus corporum choreis et saltationibus efferuntur, ne auditus et obtuitus sacris ministeriis deputati turpium spectaculorum atque verborum contagione polluantur. On the practical tendency of the laws under the hierarchy relating to marriage, see Planck's *Gesell. Verfass.* vol. ii. p. 468.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### OF FUNERAL RITES AND CEREMONIES.

#### § 1. OF THE TREATMENT OF THE DEAD.

THE early Christians were accustomed to entertain cheerful views of death, as a soft and gentle slumber, from which they awoke to a joyful immortality. The common emblems of death on their sepulchral monuments were an anchor, a lyre, a harp, a ship under full sail; or a phoenix, a crown, a palm, or other symbols of hope, and of victory, and of joy. Their birthday, *dies natalis*, was, in their phraseology, not the day of their natural birth, but of their death, when they were born to a new and nobler life. The *natalis martyrum*, in ancient history, ever indicates the day when they sealed with their blood their faith in Christ, and entered upon a life everlasting, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.

At a later period, and subsequent to the age of Constantine, it became customary to represent death by the most frightful images. The tendency of the religious mind was to turn, from the contemplation of the bright and cheerful, to the dark and gloomy in religion. A death's head, a skeleton, the "deep, damp vault, the mattock, and the grave," became the emblems of death; and every form and image of what is frightful and distressing was seized upon to body forth a conception of future woes.

Christians were distinguished by their care for the dead, and their sympathy with the afflicted. Their funeral solemnities they celebrated with gravity and propriety, with the intent of showing due respect for the deceased and of administering consolation to survivors. These funeral services were performed as a public religious duty.<sup>1</sup> This is one of the three points for which they were commended by the apostate Julian.<sup>2</sup>

The Christian church manifested from the beginning a decided preference for the custom of *burying* the dead,<sup>3</sup> for which they had

the example of Jews. Gen. iii. 9; xxiii. 19; Deut. xxiv. 6; Matt. xix. 28; etc. But the custom of *burning* the dead at that time prevailed throughout the Roman empire, to which they were zealously opposed.\* They had, at first, no separate burying-places; nor would their circumstances admit of any such design. The public burial-places, according to both Jewish and Roman laws, were on the outside of cities.<sup>4</sup> Matt. xxvi. 60; Luke vii. 12; John xi. 30. In the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries an open space around the church was appropriated for the burial of princes, bishops, and other clergy, and afterward of those who died in the communion of the church. This, like every thing which was appropriated to the service of the church, was formally consecrated. The first instance of this kind occurred in the sixth century.<sup>5</sup> In the ninth century began the custom of interring the dead within the walls of the church. This arose from the veneration entertained for martyrs. Churches were erected over their remains. Then the dying Christian sought to be laid in his final rest near the sainted martyr, and found a grave in the church near his side.

Burial-places were styled *κοιμητήρια*, *places of repose, cemeteries*, denoting hereby, not only that the dead rest from their earthly labours and sorrows, but pointing out the hope of a future resurrection.<sup>6</sup> The graveyard was also styled the *Lord's ground*, because it enjoyed the immunities of the church, or more properly

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\* The Romans, in ancient times, used to bury their dead. The dictator, Cornelius Sylla, is supposed to have been the first among them whose corpse was burnt, and that was done in compliance with his own desire. Afterward this practice became general, especially among the higher orders; and continued to prevail until the fourth century of the Christian era.—CIC. *De Legg.* ii. c. 25; VIRG. *Æn.* vi. 177. PLIN. *Hist. Nat.* vii. c. 54: “Ipsum cremare apud Romanos non fuit veteris instituti, terra condiebantur.” Conf. PLUTARCH. *Vitæ Numæ*; STOBÆI, *Serm.* 122; MACROB. *Saturn.* vii. c. 7; *Cod. Theodos.* lib. ix. tit. 6, leg. 6. The first Roman emperor whose corpse was interred was Commodus, as we learn from Xiphilinus. The early Christians protested against the custom of burning the bodies of the dead, and advocated inhumation—a practice which was always observed in the Christian church. Corpus omne, sive arescit in pulverem, sive in humorem solvitur, vel in cinerem comprimitur, vel in nidorem tenetur, subducitur nobis; sed Deo, elementorum custodi, reservatur. Nec, ut creditis, ullum damnum sepulchræ timemus, sed veterem et meliorem consuetudinem humandi frequentamus.—MINUC. FEL. *Octav.* c. 34. Ego magis ridebo vulgus, tunc quoque cum ipsis defunctos atrocissime exurit, quos post modum, gulosissime nutrit, iisdem ignibus et promerens et offendens. O pietatem de crudelitate ludentem!—TERTULL. *De Resurr.* c. 1. Conf. TERTULL. *De Anima*, c. 51; LACTANT. *Instit. Div.* lib. vi. c. 12; ORIG. *contr. Cels.* lib. viii.; AUGUSTIN, *De Civ. Dei.* lib. i. c. 13; EUSEB. *Hist. Eccl.* lib. iv. c. 16; v. 1.

perhaps, because of the sacred communion which those who sleep in the Lord were supposed to hold with him.

The church did not approve of the custom of interring the dead in family graves and private sepulchres. It was supposed to be invidious and encourage the pride of distinction.

Like the Greeks and Romans, Christians erected monuments and marked them with inscriptions, *τίτοις*, *titulis*, in memory of their friends.<sup>7</sup> Their luxury and extravagance in these matters are severely censured by Basil the Great, Chrysostom, and others. *Frustra struunt homines pretiosa sepulcra, quasi ea animæ, nec solius corporis, receptacula essent.*

The funeral solemnities of the Romans were held by night.<sup>8</sup> Those of Christians, on the other hand, were solemnized by day, but with lighted tapers, in the fourth century. In times of persecution, the Christians were often compelled to bury their dead by night, and with all possible secrecy. But under Constantine and his sons, Christian funerals were attended by day, and at times with great pomp. Probably they enacted laws on this subject in favour of Christian burials, for the apostate Julian was compelled to issue a positive decree to restore the nocturnal celebration of funeral rites.\*

The Jews, and the Eastern nations generally were accustomed to bury very soon after death. The nature of the climate might direct to this custom; but the principal reason probably was, that by the speedy removal of the corpse, they might avoid ceremonial pollution. The custom of the Greeks and Romans corresponded in this respect with that of the oriental nations. The early Christians also conformed to the custom of the country, in the early removal of the corpse, but they utterly discarded the idea that any ceremonial pollution could be contracted by contact with the dead. On the contrary, they fearlessly exposed themselves to contagion by their faithful offices to those who had died of malignant diseases as well as by administering to their necessities in sickness.<sup>9</sup> The corpse was soon removed from the house, but was usually kept for

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\* *Efferri cognovimus cadavera mortuorum per confertam populi frequentiam et per maximam insistentium densitatem: quod quidem oculos hominum infaustis infestat adspectibus. Qui enim dies est bene auspicatus a funere? aut quomodo ad Deos et templa venietur? Ideoque quoniam et dolor in exsequiis secretum amat, et diem functis nihil interest, utrum per noctes an per dies efferantur, liberari convenit totius populi adspectus, ut dolor esse in funeribus, non pompa exequiarum, nec ostentatio videatur.—Cod. Theodos. lib. ix. tit. 17, 1, 5.*

a day or more in the church, and from this originally arose the custom of keeping vigils for the dead.<sup>10</sup> The funeral was sometimes delayed for several days.

## § 2. OF AFFECTION FOR THE DYING.

THE greatest attention was bestowed by the early Christians upon the dying, and the highest respect entertained for their final counsels, instructions, and prayers. Their exhortations to surviving friends,<sup>1</sup> and their prayers in their behalf, were treasured up with pious care.<sup>2</sup> Their will in regard to the disposal of their effects, and the appropriation of them for objects of charity and benevolence, were religiously observed.<sup>3</sup> The sign of the cross was administered to them<sup>4</sup> in the fourth century. The bishop and the several orders of the clergy, as well as relatives and friends, sought to offer them consolation. Prayers were offered in the church for them.<sup>5</sup> Friends pressed around them to give and receive the parting kiss and the last embrace.<sup>6</sup> To such as were restored to Christian fellowship in their dying moments, the sacrament was administered. This was afterward united with the ceremony of extreme unction.

Friends and relatives closed the eyes and mouth of the dying<sup>7</sup>—a becoming rite, which some pagan nations have observed. But to the early Christians this was an emblem of the peaceful slumber of the deceased, from which he was expected to awake at the resurrection of the just.<sup>8</sup> The body was then washed and clothed in a garment usually of white linen, but sometimes made of more costly materials and ornamented with gold, precious stones,<sup>9</sup> etc., which, however, was the frequent subject of severe censure.<sup>10\*</sup> The corpse was laid out in its best attire; and, in Egypt, in addition to these rites, it was frequently anointed and embalmed.

Christians, contrary to the custom of the Jews, deposited the body in a coffin. This custom they observed in common with many heathen nations. The corpse was exposed to view for some time before interment, either at home, or in the streets, or more frequently in the church.<sup>11</sup> During this time it was attended by the nearest relatives and friends, whose duty it was to perform these last offices of affection for the dead. The wailings of mourning

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\* *Parcite quæso vobis, parcite saltem divitiis quas amatis. Cur et martuos vestros auratis obvolvitis vestibus? Cur ambitio inter luctus lacrimasque non cessat? An cadavera divitum nisi in serico putrescere nesciunt?*—*HIERON. De Vita Paulin.*



women were on no account allowed, as was customary among the Jews and many pagan nations. Such lamentations were exceedingly incongruous to the Christian, who regarded death as no loss, but unspeakable gain.

The office of sexton was of very early date, and held in high repute, as an honourable occupation.

### § 3. OF FUNERAL SOLEMNITIES.

THE body was borne on a bier in solemn procession to the burial-place, and followed by the relatives and friends of the deceased as mourners, among whom the clergy and some others were reckoned. Besides these, many others, as spectators, joined in the procession. These processions were sometimes so thronged as to occasion serious accidents, and even the loss of life.<sup>1</sup> It was the duty of the acolyths to conduct the procession. The bier was borne sometimes on the shoulder, and sometimes by the hands. The nearest relations or persons of rank and distinction were the bearers. Even the bishops and clergy often officiated in this capacity. In the early ages of the church the nearest relatives especially were the pall-bearers to carry the body to the grave.

The tolling of bells at funerals was introduced in the eighth and ninth centuries. This office is expressed in the following distich, which was inscribed upon the church-bell:

*Laudo Deum verum; plebem voco; congreco clerum,  
Defunctos ploro; nimbum fugo; festaque honoro.*

Previous to the use of bells, the trumpet and wooden clappers were used for similar purposes.

The carrying of the cross in funeral processions is mentioned in the sixth century, and again in the ninth, but it does not appear to have been in earlier use. Palms and olive-branches were carried in funeral processions for the first time in the fourth century, in imitation of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The cypress was rejected, because it was a symbol of mourning. The carrying of burning lamps and tapers was earlier and more general. This was a festive representation of the triumph of the deceased over death, and of his union with Christ, as in the festival of the Lamb in the Apocalypse.<sup>2</sup> The Christians repudiated the custom of crowning the corpse and the coffin with garlands, as savouring of idolatry.<sup>3</sup> But it was usual with them to strew flowers upon the grave.<sup>4</sup> Lighted torches were sometimes carried before and after

the coffin, in token of victory over death, and union with Christ at the marriage-supper of the Lamb. References to this rite date back no further than the fourth century.

Psalms and hymns were sung while the corpse was kept, while it was carried in procession, and around the grave. Notices of this custom are found in several authors.<sup>5</sup> These anthems were altogether of a joyful character. But Bingham has well remarked that "we cannot expect to find much of this in the first ages, while the Christians were in a state of persecution; but as soon as their peaceable times were come, we find it in every writer. The author of the Apostolical Constitutions<sup>6</sup> gives this direction, that they should carry forth their dead with 'reading the holy books and singing for the martyrs who are fallen asleep in the Lord; for all the saints from the beginning of the world, and for your brethren that are asleep in the Lord.' 'For precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.' And again it is said, 'Return to thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath rewarded thee. And the memory of the just shall be blessed; and the souls of the just are in the hand of the Lord.' These, probably, were some of the verses which made up their psalmody on such occasions. For Chrysostom, speaking of this matter, not only tells us the reason of their psalmody, but what particular psalms or portions of them they made use of for this solemnity. 'What mean our hymns?' says he; 'do we not glorify God and give him thanks, that he hath crowned him that is departed, that he hath delivered him from trouble, that he hath set him free from all fear? Consider what thou singest at that time: Turn again unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath rewarded thee. And again, I fear no evil, because thou art with me. And again, Thou art my refuge from the affliction which compasseth me about. Consider what these psalms mean. If thou believest the things which thou sayest to be true, why dost thou weep and lament, and make a mere pageantry and mock of thy singing? If thou believest them not to be true, why dost thou play the hypocrite, so much as to sing?'<sup>7</sup> He speaks this against those who used excessive mourning at funerals, showing them the incongruity of that with this psalmody of the church."<sup>8</sup> (Book xxiii. c. 3.)

Funeral prayers also constituted an appropriate part of the burial-service of the dead.

Funeral orations, *λόγοι ἐπικήδειοι, ἐπιτάφια*, were also delivered, commemorative of the deceased. Several of these are still extant,

as that of Eusebius at the funeral of Constantine; those of Ambrose on the deaths of Theodosius and Valentinian, and of his own brother Satyrus; those of Gregory, and of Nazianzum upon his father, his brother Cæsarius, and his sister Gorgonia.

The sacrament of the Lord's supper was administered at funerals and often at the grave itself.<sup>9</sup> By this rite it was intimated that the communion of saints was still perpetuated between the living and the dead. It was a favourite idea that both still continued members of the same mystical body, one and the same on earth and in heaven. This mode of celebrating the supper was also an honourable testimony to the faith of the deceased, and of his consistent Christian profession in life. The Roman Catholic superstition of offerings and masses for the dead took its rise from this ancient usage of the church. Some time previous to the sixth and seventh centuries, it became customary to administer the elements to the dead—to deposit a portion of the consecrated elements in the coffin—to give a parting kiss of charity, and to conclude the funeral solemnities with an entertainment similar to the agapæ. Of these usages the first mentioned were speedily abolished,<sup>10</sup> and the last was gradually discontinued.

It was universally customary with Christians to deposit the corpse in the grave, as in modern times, facing the east; and in the same attitude as at the present day. The reasons for this are given in the following extract:—"Christiani solent sepelire—1. *Supinos*, quia mors nostra proprie non est mors, sed brevis quidam somnus. 2. *Vultu ad cælum converso*, quia solo in cœlo spes nostra fundata est. 3. *Versus orientem*, argumento sperandæ et exoptandæ resurrectionis."<sup>11</sup>

The burial-service was concluded, like all other religious solemnities, with the Lord's prayer and the benediction.

#### § 4. OF MOURNERS.

DEATH was regarded by the early Christians, not as an afflictive but joyful event. All immoderate grief or mourning was accordingly inconsistent, in their view, with Christian faith and hope.\*

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\* Fratres nostri non lugendi accersione Dominica de sæculo liberati, cum sciamus, non eos omitti, sed præmitti, recedentes præcedere, ut proficiscentes et navigantes, desiderari eos debere, non plangi; nec accipiendas hic *atras vestes*, quando illi ibi *indumenta alba* jam sumserint: occasionem non dandam esse gentilibus, ut nos merito et jure reprehendant, quod quos vivere apud Deum dicimus

For this reason they severely reproved the Jewish and Roman custom of hiring women to make lamentations for the dead.<sup>1</sup> It must not be supposed, however, that they either condemned the exercise of natural affection or affected a stoical indifference. On the contrary, there are many passages of ancient authors in which the right and power of nature in this respect are recognised, and a becoming sorrow, occasioned by the death of friends, is justified, both on principles of reason, and by reference to examples in Scripture.\*

In conformity with their views of death, Christians also utterly discarded the Jewish badges of mourning—sackcloth and ashes, and garments rent. Some of the fathers severely censure the Roman custom of wearing black.<sup>2</sup> Augustin especially is peculiarly severe on this point. “Why,” says he, “should we disfigure ourselves with black, unless we would imitate unbelieving nations, not only in their wailing for the dead, but also in their mourning apparel! Be assured these are foreign and unlawful usages; but if lawful,

ut extinctos et perditos lugeamus, et fidem, quam sermone et voce depromimus, cordis et pectoris testimonio reprobemur.—CYPRIAN, *De Mortal.* Omnibus Christianis prohibitum defunctos flere.—*Concil. Tolet.* 111.

\* Non omnis infidelitatis aut infirmitatis est fletus; alius est naturæ dolor, alia est tristitia in diffidentia, et plurimum refert, desiderare, quod habueris, et lugere, quod amiseris. . . . Fecerunt et fletum magnum sui, cum patriarchæ sepe-lirentur. Lacrymæ ergo pietatis indices, non illices sunt doloris. Lacrymatus sum ergo, fateor, et ego, sed lacrymatus est et Dominus; ille alienum, ego fratrem.—AMRROS. *Orat. in Obi. Fratris.* Quorum nos vita propter amicitia solatia delectabat, unde fieri potest, ut eorum mors nullam nobis ingerat mœstitudinem? Quam qui prohibet, prohibeat, si potest, amica colloquia, interdicat amicalem societatem, vel intercidat adfectum omnium humanarum necessitudinum, vincula mentis immiti stupore disrumpat, aut sic eis utendem esse censeat, ut nulla ex eis animum dulcedo perfundat. Quod si fieri nullo modo potest, etiam hoc, quo pacto futurum est, ut ejus nobis amara mors non sit, ejus dulcis est vita? Hinc enim est luctus quidem [al. quidam] humano corde quasi vulnus aut ulcus, cui sanando adhibentur officiosæ consolationes. Non enim propterea est, quod non sanetur; quoniam quanto est animus melior, tanto in eo citius faciliusque sanatur.—AUGUSTIN. *De Civ. Dei*, lib. xix. c. 8. Premebam oculos ejus [sc. matris,] et confluebat in præcordia mea mœstitudo ingens, et transflebat in lacrimas, ibidemque oculi mei violento animi imperio resorbabant fontem suum usque ad siccitatem, et in tali luctamine valde male mihi erat. Tum vero ubi efflavit extremum spiritum, puer Adeodatus exclamavit in planctum, atque ab omnibus nobis coërcitus tacuit. Hoc modo etiam meum quiddam puerile, quod labeatur in fletus, juvenili voce cordis coërcetur et tacebat. Neque enim decere arbitrabamur, funus illud questibus lacrimosis gemitibusque celebrare, quia his plerumque solet deplorari quædam miseria morientium, aut quasi omnimoda extinctio. At illa nec misere moriebatur, nec omnino moriebatur.—AUGUSTIN. *Confess.* lib. ix c. 12. Conf. CHRYSOST. *Hom.* 29, *De Dormient.*; *Hom.* 61, in *Johann.*



they are not becoming.”<sup>3</sup> Black, however, was, from the beginning, the customary mourning habit in the Greek church, and the use of it soon became general.

No precise rules prevailed respecting the duration of mourning for the dead. This matter was left to custom and the feeling of the parties concerned. “The heathen had a custom of repeating their mourning on the third, seventh, and ninth day, which was particularly called the *novendiale*; and some added the twentieth, thirtieth, and fortieth, not without a superstitious opinion of those particular days, wherein they used to sacrifice to their manes with milk, and wine, and garlands, and flowers, as the Roman antiquities inform us. Something of this superstition, abating the sacrifice, was still remaining among the ignorant Christians in St. Austin’s time; for he speaks of some who observed a novendial in relation to their dead,<sup>4</sup> which he thinks they ought to be forbidden, because it was only a heathen custom. He does not seem to intimate that they kept it exactly as the heathen did; but rather that they were superstitious in their observation of nine days of mourning, which was without example in Scripture. There was another way, of continuing the funeral offices for three days together, which was allowed among Christians, because it had nothing in it but the same worship of God repeated. Then Euodius, writing to St. Austin,<sup>5</sup> and giving him an account of the funeral of a very pious young man, who had been his votary, says that he had given him honourable obsequies, worthy of so great a soul: for he continued to sing hymns to God for three days together at his grave, and on the third day offered the sacraments of redemption. The author of the Constitutions<sup>6</sup> takes notice of the repetition of the funeral office on the third day, and the ninth day, and the fortieth day, giving peculiar reasons for each of them:—“Let the third day be observed for the dead with psalms, and lessons, and prayers, because Christ on the third day rose again from the dead; and let the ninth day be observed in remembrance of the living and the dead; and also the fortieth day, according to the ancient manner of the Israelites mourning for Moses forty days; and finally let the anniversary day be observed in commemoration of the deceased.”

“On the anniversary days of commemorating the dead, they were used to make a common feast or entertainment, inviting both the clergy and people, but especially the poor and needy, the widows and orphans, that it might not only be a memorial of rest to the dead, but an odour of sweet smell to themselves in the



sight of God, as the author under the name of Origen words it. St. Chrysostom says<sup>7</sup> that they were more tenacious of this custom than they were of some others of greater importance. But this often degenerated into great abuses."<sup>8</sup>

## § 5. OF THE PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD.

THE fact is undeniable that the ancient church, at a very early period, entertained unwarrantable notions of the efficacy of prayer for the dead, and habitually made them the subject of their intercessions both in their public and their private devotions. This subject is generally passed in silence by the German authors on the antiquities of the Christian church, but it has been discussed by different writers of the English church, particularly by Bingham and Usher, from whom the following summary of ancient authorities have been chiefly collected by Riddle,<sup>1</sup> whose order and language is adopted in the following article, with some additions and omissions.

*Tertullian*, (died 220,) in his treatise on the *Soldier's Chaplet*, speaks of prayer for the dead as a custom of the church at the time of his writing that treatise, which was probably not long after the year 200:—"We make anniversary oblations for the dead, for their birthdays," meaning the days of their death.\* In another of his works the same author says that it was the practice of a widow to pray for the soul of her deceased husband, desiring on his behalf *present refreshment or rest, and a part in the first resurrection*; and offering annually an oblation for him on the day of his falling asleep, *i. e.*, his death. And elsewhere he represents a bereaved husband as praying for the soul of his deceased wife, and offering annual oblations for her.†

*Origen* (died 254) tells us that Christians in his time "thought it right and useful to make mention of the saints in their public

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\* Oblationes pro defunctis, pro natalitiis, annua die facimus.—TERTULL. *De Corona Militis*, c. 3.

† Pro anima ejus orat, et refrigerium interim adpostulat ei, et in prima resurrectione consortium, et offert annuis diebus dormitionis ejus.—Id. *De Monogamia*, c. 10. Jam repete apud Deum pro ejus spiritu postules, pro qua oblationes annuas reddas.—*Exhort. ad Castit.* c. 11. Tertullian held that every little offence of the faithful would be punished by delaying their resurrection. Modicum quodque delictum mora resurrectionis luendum.—*De Anima*, c. 58.

prayers, and to improve themselves by the commemoration of their worthies.\*

*Cyprian* (died 258) affirms that in his time it was the practice of Christians to offer oblations and sacrifices of commemoration for martyrs, on the anniversary days of their martyrdom, with thanksgiving; and he refers also to the oblations and supplications, or deprecatory prayers, on behalf of other departed members of the church.† In another place *Cyprian* says—"When we have departed hence, there is no place left for repentance, and no effect of satisfaction."‡

*Arnobius*, in his treatise against the heathen, written probably about the year 305, speaking of the prayers offered after the consecration of the elements in the Lord's supper, says that Christians prayed for pardon and peace on behalf of the living and the dead.§

*Cyril of Jerusalem* (died 386) reports the prayer made after consecration of the elements at the holy communion, in these words: "We offer this sacrifice in memory of all those who have fallen asleep before us, first, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, that God by their prayers and intercessions may receive our supplications; and then we pray for our holy fathers and bishops, and all that have fallen asleep before us, believing that it is a great advantage to their souls to be prayed for, while the holy and tremendous sacrifice lies upon the altar."²

The same writer furnishes evidence that in his time many persons doubted the efficacy of prayer as a means of procuring benefit to the dead. "I know many," he observes in the same book, "who say, What profit does the soul receive that goes out of this world, either with sins, or without sins, if you make mention of it in prayer?"

\* *Meminisse sanctorum sive in collectis solennibus, sive pro eo ut ex recordatione eorum proficiamus, aptum et conveniens videtur.*—*Orig. lib. ix. in Rom. 12.*

† *Celebrentur hic a nobis oblationes et sacrificia ob commemorationes eorum* *CYPR. Ep. 37, al. 22, ad Clerum.* *Sacrificia pro eis semper, ut meministis, offerimus, quoties martyrum passiones et dies anniversaria commemoratione celebramus.*—*Ep. 34, al. 39.* *Non est quod pro dormitione ejus apud vos fiat oblatio, aut deprecatio aliqua nomine ejus in ecclesia frequentetur.*—*Ep. 66, al. 1.*

‡ *Quando isthinc excessum fuerit, nullus jam locus pœnitentiæ est nullus satisfactiones effectus.*—*CYPR. ad Demetrian, § 16.*

§ *Cur immaniter conventicula nostra dirui meruerint? In quibus summus oratur Deus, pax cunctis et venia postulatur, magistratibus, exercitibus, regibus, familiaribus, inimicis, adhuc vitam degentibus, et resolutis corporum vinctione.*—*ARNOB. Adv. Gentes, lib. iv.*

*Gregory of Nazianzum* (died 390) prayed that God would receive the soul of his brother *Cæsarius*.<sup>3</sup> Archbishop Usher quotes the following passage from this father, in testimony of his dissent from the opinion that the dead could be profited by the prayers of the living:—"Then in vain shall one go about to relieve those that lament. Here men may have a remedy, but afterward there is nothing but bonds, or all things are fast bound."<sup>4</sup> It may be observed that this passage proves only that Gregory esteemed prayer of no avail to those who may die in sin.

In the writings of *Ambrose*, (died 397,) we meet with prayers of that father on behalf of the deceased *Theodosius* and *Valentinian*, and his own brother; and we find him giving instructions to a Christian not to weep for a deceased sister, but to make prayers and oblations for her.<sup>5</sup> The same author affirms, in another place, that "death is a haven of rest, and makes not our condition worse; but according as it finds every man, so it reserves him to the judgment that is to come."<sup>6</sup>

*Aërius* appears to have been the first who publicly protested against the practice of praying for the dead; which he did upon the ground of the uselessness of such prayers to those who were the subjects of them. His objections were met by *Epiphanius*, (died 403,) who maintained,<sup>7</sup> first, that prayer for the dead was useful, as testifying the faith and hope of the living, inasmuch as it showed their belief that the departed were still in being, and living with the Lord; and secondly, as a further argument that "the prayer which is made for them does profit, although it do not cut off all their sins; yet, forasmuch as while we are in the world we oftentimes slip, both unwillingly and with our will, it serves to signify that which is more perfect. For we make," continues he, "a memorial both for the just and for sinners; for sinners, entreating the mercy of God; for the just, (both the fathers and patriarchs, the prophets, and apostles, and evangelists, and martyrs, and confessors; bishops also, and authorities, and the whole order,) that we may serve the Lord Jesus Christ from the rank of all other men, by the honour that we do unto him, and that we may yield worship unto him."

*Chrysostom*, (died 407,) speaking of the death of the wicked, says, "They are not so much to be lamented as succoured with prayers, and supplications, and alms, and oblations. For these things were not designed in vain, neither is it without reason that we make mention of those that are deceased in the holy mysteries, inter-

ceding for them to the Lamb that is slain to take away the sins of the world; but that some consolation may hence arise to them. Neither is it in vain that he who stands at the altar, when the tremendous mysteries are celebrated, cries, 'We offer unto thee for all those that are asleep in Christ, and all that make commemorations for them.' For if there were no commemorations made for them, these things would not be said. Let us not therefore grow weary in giving them our assistance, and offering prayers for them.

"Let us not be weary in aid of the departed, and in prayer for them, for the communion is a sin-offering for the whole world. Encouraged by this consideration, we pray for the whole world; and with martyrs, confessors, and priests, we make mention also of them (the dead) in our prayers, and it surely is possible by our prayers, by our offerings in their behalf, and by the (saints) invoked in connection with them, to obtain pardon for them."\* Several other passages to the same effect may be found in Bingham and Riddle.

*Augustin* (died 430) maintained that the martyrs do not need the prayers of the church, and that we ought to offer only thanksgivings on their behalf. He considered that the prayers of the living might be of some advantage to such of the dead as had been guilty of only minor trespasses; but that they could not at all assist those who had been very wicked. "There goes a common saying under his name," says Bingham, "which Pope Innocent III. quotes as holy Scripture, 'that he who prays for a martyr does injury to the martyr, because they attained to perfection in this life, and have no need of the prayers of the church, as all others have.' Therefore, he says, 'When they were named at the altar, and their memorials celebrated, they did not commemorate them as persons for whom they prayed, as they did all others that rested in peace, but rather as men that prayed for the church on earth, that we might follow their steps.' Upon this account, St. Austin thought that oblations and alms that were usually offered in the church for all the dead that had received baptism were only thanksgivings for such as were very good, and propitiations for those that were not

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\* Μὴ δὲ ἀποκύμωμεν τοῖς ἀπελθοῦσι βοηθοῦντες, καὶ προσφέροντες ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν εὐχάς· καὶ γὰρ τὸ κοινὸν τῆς οἰκουμένης κεῖται καθάρσιον, διὰ τοῦτο θαρρύντες ὑπὲρ τῆς οἰκουμένης δεόμεθα τότε, καὶ μετὰ τῶν μαρτύρων αὐτοὺς κολοῦμεν, μετὰ ὁμολογητῶν μετὰ ἱερῶν· καὶ—δυνατὸν πάντοθεν συγγνώμην αὐτοῖς συναγαγεῖν ἀπὸ τῶν εὐχῶν, ἀπὸ τῶν δώρων, ἀπὸ τῶν μετ' αὐτῶν καλουμένων.—CHRYSOST. *Hom.* 41, 1 Cor.



very bad; and for such as were very evil, though they were no helps to them when they were dead, yet they were some consolation to the living. And to those who derive any benefit from these prayers, this is the benefit, either that they obtain a full remission, or that their condemnation be made more tolerable."

In the *Confessions of Augustin*, (lib. ix. c. 13,) we find a long prayer of this writer in behalf of his departed mother, Monica.

*Theodoret* (died 456) says, "After death the punishment of sin is without remedy (immedicabilis)." (*Quæst. in lib. ii. Reg.*, cap. 18, 19.)

In the *Apostolical Constitutions* we find the following prayer among those which are appointed to be repeated after the consecration of the elements in the Lord's Supper:

"We offer unto thee for all thy saints that have lived well-pleasing in thy sight from the foundation of the world, for patriarchs, prophets, holy men, apostles, martyrs, confessors, bishops, presbyters, deacons, subdeacons, readers, singers, virgins, widows, laymen, and all whose names thou knowest."

The form of prayer to be used at funerals, as given in the *Constitutions*, (lib. vii. c. 41,) is still more express.

This chapter is particularly worthy of notice as introducing the idea of the ministry of guardian angels for the dying and the dead. The prayer is for them who have fallen asleep, (ὕπὲρ τῶν κεκοιμημένων,) for our brethren that are at rest in Christ, (ὕπὲρ ἀναπαυσαμένων ἐν Χριστῷ ἀδελφῶν.) Very remarkable in this prayer is the passage, "Forgive him, if voluntarily or involuntarily he hath sinned, and afford him merciful angels," (ἀγγέλους εὐμενεῖς παράστησον αὐτῷ.) Here is expressed a view which our constitutions have in common with many of the church fathers, namely, that in the death of men, angels assist the dying; the angel of peace, the pious; who soothes their souls, leads them to heaven, and conducts them to God. It is exceedingly difficult to determine the age of this prayer; for nothing is contained in it that could lead to individual relations of time. There is, however, no ground at all to deny its belonging to the age of Chrysostom; and our opinion is corroborated by the consideration that his extended liturgy, embracing all parts of the ecclesiastical life, contained also, perhaps, this prayer for them who have fallen asleep. It is here to be further remarked, that in the author of the *Incomplete Work on Matthew*, (xxiv. 43,) is found the same representation of the angel which we have pointed out in this prayer. In the passage



cited, he calls him *the angel of death*, (*angelum mortis*.) Pearson has proved that this author lived soon after the time of the Emperor Theodosius [who died A. D. 395]; and hence it is very possible that the mention of that angel proceeded from the representation prevalent in the time common to them both.

*Jerome* (died 420) says:—"While we are in this present world we may be able to help one another, either by our prayers or by our counsels; but when we shall come before the judgment-seat of Christ, neither Job, nor Daniel, nor Noah can entreat for any one, but every one must bear his own burden."<sup>8</sup>

On the whole, therefore, it appears that from the time of Tertullian, at least, and probably from a still earlier date, the church was accustomed to offer prayers for the dead. Many teachers of the church during the third and fourth centuries sanctioned this superstitious practice; some of them encouraging a belief that the prayers of the living were a means of procuring certain imaginary benefits for those who had died in sin, as well as for those who had departed in the faith; but others affirming that the dead could derive no benefit from the prayers of survivors. So that while it was the erroneous opinion that prayers and oblations ought to be made for the dead, and was the received and universal doctrine of the church, it was yet a question among Christian doctors, on which they were allowed to differ, whether the dead received any profit from such prayers. The entire abandonment of a custom so much at variance with Divine truth was reserved for that brighter period in the history of the church in which "the Bible, the Bible alone," began (perhaps for the first time since the commencement of the second century) to be recognised as the sole depository of the principles of our religion, and the only unerring guide of Christian practice.

When the prayers of the early Church were offered in behalf of persons supposed to have died in the faith, who were regarded as about to enter into happiness, Christians were understood to beseech God that he would receive those persons to himself; they gave thanks for their deliverance out of this sinful world; they petitioned for the Divine forgiveness of all remains of sin and imperfection in the departed; they intended to offer a tribute of respect and affection to the deceased, and to testify their own belief of the immortality of the soul and a future life; and they sought to procure for their departed friends the blessings of an early share in the millennial reign of Christ upon earth, (which was confidently

expected by the early Christians,) as well as favour at the day of judgment, (when they supposed that *all men* would pass through a fire of purgation,) and an augmentation of their reward and glory in the state of final blessedness.

It is certain also that prayers were offered for those who had died in sin, in the hope of mitigating their sufferings, or rendering their condemnation more tolerable.<sup>9</sup>

The extracts which follow are added to show what sentiments were held by the early church on this subject, and by what perversions of these errors the Romish doctrine of purgatory was evolved.

“Christians,” says Dr. Burton, “were at this time (namely, in the middle of the third century) generally agreed in supposing that the soul in its separate or disembodied state enjoyed a kind of consciousness, and was not insensible or asleep. They seem, also, to have considered that the souls of good and bad men were in a different state, or rather in a different place; for we have little means of judging of the opinion of the early Christians as to the actual condition of the souls of bad men: but with respect to the souls of the righteous, they conceived them to be in a place by themselves, where they enjoyed a kind of foretaste of the happiness which awaited them hereafter. It was also believed by a large portion of Christians, that the resurrection of the righteous would take place before the final resurrection of all mankind at the day of judgment. . . . When they spoke of the first resurrection, they meant that the righteous would rise and reign with Christ upon earth for a thousand years, at the end of which period the general resurrection would take place. It was natural for them to add to this belief, that the souls of the righteous, while they were in their separate abode, were anxiously looking forward to the time of the first resurrection, when they would be released from their confinement; and their surviving friends did not think it improper to make it a subject of their own prayers to God, that He would be pleased to hasten the period when those who had departed in His faith and fear might enter into his heavenly kingdom.

“This was the only sense in which prayers were offered for the dead by the early Christians. They did not think that their prayers could affect the present or future condition of those who were departed. They believed them to be in a state of happiness immediately after death, and to be certain of enjoying still greater happiness hereafter. It was only the period of their entering upon

this final state which was supposed to be affected by the prayers of the living; and it afforded a melancholy satisfaction to the latter to meet at the graves of their friends, or on the anniversary of their death, and to remember them in their prayers to God."

#### § 6. OF THE ORIGIN OF THE DOCTRINE OF PURGATORY.

"THE idea of Hades, which was known both to the Hebrews and the Greeks, was transferred to Christianity, and the assumption that the true happiness or the final misery of the departed does not commence till after the general judgment and the resurrection of the body, appeared to render necessary the belief in an intermediate state. The soul was supposed to remain there from the moment of its separation from the body to the said catastrophe. Justin Martyr makes the souls of the pious take up their temporary abode in a better, those of the wicked in a worse place.<sup>1</sup> He even terms that doctrine heretical (§ 80) according to which the souls are received into heaven immediately after death; but he admits that they have a presentiment of their future destiny. Irenæus also assigns to the soul a separate place of abode, where it awaits the resurrection of the body, to which it is then reunited.<sup>2</sup> Tertullian speaks of the sequestration of the body, but explicitly rejects the notion of the sleep of the body.<sup>3</sup> He held that the martyrs went immediately to the abode of the blessed.

The oriental idea of a purifying fire occurs also during this period, in the writings of Clement of Alexandria and Origen. This purifying fire, however, is not thought to perform its work in the intermediate state, but is either taken in a comprehensive sense, or supposed to stand in some connection or other with the general conflagration of the world.<sup>4</sup> Origen thought that this baptism of fire at the end of the world would be necessary for those who have forfeited the baptism of the spirit.<sup>5</sup>

#### § 7. OF THE WORSHIP OF MARTYRS, SAINTS, AND ANGELS.<sup>1</sup>

THE worship of these came into use in the fourth and fifth centuries. Some few traces of such worship at earlier periods may be found, and innumerable instances of a later date. It has been a great question whether such were invoked as direct mediators with God, or not; and again, whether these invocations imply the offering of such divine honours as are paid to Christ or to God. This

the Catholic writers generally deny. Their assertion is, that these invocations are not acts of *adoration*, but only a means of grace to awaken pious feeling and to aid us in rendering due worship to God. *Non sancti Dei appetunt indebitas laudes sed ut rationabile fiat obsequium nostrum.*<sup>2</sup> The saints are not our *immediate intercessors* with God; but whatever they obtain for us from God, they obtain *through Christ*. We therefore invoke the saints, to the end that they may do that which we also do, and which they are better able to do than we are; and the united prayer of both must be more influential than that of us alone. We only implore the saints to intercede with God for us, that the merits of Christ may be applied to us; and that through him we may obtain grace and glory.”<sup>3</sup>

The evangelical church, on the other hand, contend that all worship of saints and images is idolatry. The primitive church, while they scrupulously worshipped Christ as God, rejected with abhorrence the worship of saints and of images.<sup>4</sup>

The history of the delusion above mentioned is sketched by Gieseler in the following terms:—

“The notion that the prayers of the dead availed for the living was prevalent in the school of Origen even in the third century,\* but had not yet sufficient authority to influence directly the mode of honouring the martyrs.

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\* *Origines in Cant. Cant.* lib. iii. ed. de la Rue, t. iii. p. 75: Sed et omnes sancti, qui de hac vita decesserunt, habentes adhuc charitatem erga eos qui in hoc mundo sunt, si dicantur curam gerere salutis eorum, et juvare eos precibus suis atque interventu suo apud Deum, *non erit inconveniens*.—Idem, in libr. Jesu Naz. Hom. 16, § 5, (t. ii. p. 437:) Ego sic arbitror, quod omnes illi, qui dormierunt ante nos, patres pugnent nobiscum et adjuvent nos orationibus suis. Ita namque etiam quemdam de senioribus magistris audiui dicentem in eo loco, in quo scriptum est in *Numeris*, (xxii. 4,) quia *ablinget synagoga illa hanc synagogam, sicut ablingit vitulus herbam viridem in campo*. Dicebat ergo: Quare hujusmodi similitudo assumpta est, nisi quia hoc est, quod intelligendum est in hoc loco, quod synagoga Domini, quæ nos præcessit in sanctis, ore et lingua consumit adversariam synagogam, *i. e.* orationibus et precibus adversarios nostros absumit?—Idem, in *Epist. ad Rom.* lib. ii. p. 479: Jam vero si etiam extra corpus positi vel sancti, qui cum Christo sunt, agunt aliquid, et laborant pro nobis ad similitudinem angelorum, qui salutis nostræ ministeria procurant: vel rursum peccatores etiam ipsi extra corpus positi agunt aliquid secundum propositum mentis suæ, ad angelorum nihilominus similitudinem sinistrorum, cum quibus et in æternum ignem mittendi dicuntur a Christo: *habeatur et hoc quoque inter occulta Dei, nec chartulæ committenda mysteria*. Origen's follower, Eusebius præp. *Evang.* xii. c. 3, begins with referring to Plato de Legg. lib. xi., and then proceeds: Καὶ ἐν τῷ βίβλῳ δὲ τῶν Μακκαβαίων (2 Macc. xv. 14) λέγεται Ἰερემίας ὁ προφήτης μετὰ τὴν ἀπαλλαγὴν τοῦ βίου, εὐχόμενος ὁρᾶσθαι ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαοῦ, ὡς φροντίδα ποιούμενος τῶν ἐπὶ γῆς ἀνθρώπων. Δεὶ δὲ φησι καὶ ὁ Πλάτων τούτοις πιστεῦν. Hence the custom, very early, of asking the living martyrs for



“The more remote the times of the martyrs, the greater the adoration paid to them. The heathen converts, naturally enough, transferred to them the honours they had been used to pay their demigods, while the horror of creature-worship, which had hitherto operated as a check on the growing superstition, had been gradually dying away since the extinction of paganism. As men had long been accustomed to assemble for public worship at the graves of the martyrs, the idea of erecting churches (*μαρτύρια*, *memoria*) over them would readily occur. In Egypt, the Christians began to embalm the bodies of reputed saints and keep them in their houses. The communion with the martyrs being thus associated with the presence of their material remains, these were dug up from the graves and placed in the churches, especially under the altars; and the popular feeling having now a visible object to excite it, became more extravagant and superstitious than ever. The old opinion of the efficacy of their intercession who had died a martyr’s death, was now united with the belief that it was possible to communicate with them directly; a belief founded partly on the popular notion that departed souls always lingered around the bodies they had once inhabited, and partly on the views entertained of the glorified state of the martyrs, a sort of omnipresence being ascribed to them. These notions may be traced to Origen, and his followers were the first who apostrophized the martyrs in their sermons, and besought their intercession. But though the orators were somewhat extravagant in this respect, they were far outdone by the poets, who soon took up this theme, and could find no expressions strong enough to describe the power and the glory of the martyrs. Their relics soon began to work miracles, and to be valuable articles of trade. In proportion as men felt the need of such intercession they sought to increase the number of the intercessors. Not only those, who, on account of services rendered the church, were inscribed in the *Diptycha*, but the pious characters from the Old Testament and the most distinguished of the monks were ranked among the saints. Martyrs before unknown announced themselves in visions; others revealed the place of their burial. From the beginning of the fifth century the prayers for the saints were discontinued, as unbefitting

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their intercession after death. Thus Euseb. de Martyr. Palæst. cap. 7, relates that a certain Theodocia in Cæsarea approached the martyrs who were awaiting death, ὁμοῦ φιλοφρονουμένη, καὶ οἷα εἰκὸς ὑπὲρ τοῦ μνημονεύειν αὐτῆς πρὸς τὸν κύριον γενομένους παρακαλοῦσα. On the other hand, there is as yet no trace of prayers to the dead.



their glorified state. Christians were now but seldom called upon to address their prayers to God; the usual mode being to pray only to some saint for his intercession. With this worship of the saints were joined many of the customs of the heathen. Men chose their patron saints, and dedicated churches to their worship. The heathen, whom the Christians used to reproach with worshipping dead men, found now ample opportunity of retort.

“Throughout the fourth century there was no peculiar preference of the Virgin Mary above other saints. The church went as yet no further than to maintain the doctrine of her perpetual virginity, to which the monastic notions of the time naturally led. The opinion that she had ever borne other children than Jesus was declared to be heresy; as for instance by Epiphanius, in the case of the *Ἀντιδιχομαριανίται* in Arabia, A. D. 367, by Jerome in the case of Helvidius at Rome, A. D. 383, and by the Macedonian bishops in the case of Bonosus, bishop of Sardica, A. D. 391, while it was shown in what way she gave birth to our Saviour without ceasing to be a virgin. Neither did the teachers of the church in the fourth century scruple to attribute to her faults; and Epiphanius includes certain women in his catalogue of heretics, for their extravagant adoration of the Virgin. The Nestorian controversy first led men to set her above all other saints as the mother of God, *Θεοτόκος*.

Though it was the general belief that the *angels* watched over men and brought their prayers to God, it was thought unallowable to worship them, because of the passages Col. ii. 18; Rev. xix. 10; xxii. 8, 9. Ambrose is the first who seems to recommend such a worship; and after his time we find many marks of adoration paid them; though much fewer than to the saints.”

#### § 8. RECAPITULATION.—CEMETERIES, CATACOMBS.

FLEURY has concisely stated the ceremonials of the last offices to the dead, which statement is added as a brief recapitulation.

“The Christians buried their dead after the manner of the Jews. They first washed, then embalmed them; employing (saith *Tertullian*) more perfumes and aromatic gums in this use than the heathens did in their sacrifices. They wrapped them up in fine linen or silk, and sometimes put on them rich habits. They laid them forth for the space of three days, during which time they constantly attended the dead body, and passed those days in watching and praying by it. Then they carried it to the grave, accompa-

nying the corpse with torches and flambeaus, with singing of psalms and hymns to the praise of God, and in testimony of their hope of the resurrection. They made prayers also on their behalf; offered the sacrifice, and made their *agape* or *love-feast* for the poor, distributing likewise other alms among them. At the end of the year they made a fresh commemoration for them, and so from year to year, besides the standing commemoration for the dead always joined with the sacrifice.

“The church had officers appointed on purpose for the burying of their dead, who were called gravemakers or labourers, and who are sometimes reckoned among the clergy. The priests and bishops themselves looked upon the employment as an honour; and St. Eutychian, the pope, who was himself a martyr, is reported to have interred with his own hands the bodies of three hundred and forty-two martyrs. There were often, together with the body, put into the sepulchre several other things, either as marks of honour to the deceased or to preserve his memory, as the badges of his dignity, the instruments of his martyrdom, vials or sponges filled with his blood, the acts of his martyrdom, an epitaph on him, or at least his name, medals, leaves of *laurel* or some other *evergreen*, some crosses, and the gospel. They used to lay the body on its back, the face turned to the east. The heathens, to preserve the memory of their dead, built stately sepulchres over them, either by the sides of the great roads or in the open fields. The Christians, on the contrary, removed their dead out of sight, either after the common way of interment or laying them in vaults under ground; such as were the *tombs* or *catacombs* near Rome.

“These *catacombs* were places under ground, cut out of quarries of soft and brittle stone, or hollowed out of the beds of sand; thus contrived by the Christians for their burying-places. There are winding stairs leading down to them, and long walks or streets which have on each side of them, cut into the earth, two or three rows of deep niches, in which the bodies are placed at *first*; for *now* the greatest part of them are taken away. At certain distances from each other are spacious chambers, vaulted over and solid as the rest, having also niches cut in them like those of the walks. The greatest part of these chambers are painted with divers histories of the Old and New Testaments, as their churches also were wont to be. And in some of these cemeteries there are subterranean churches. In many of them there have been found marble coffins, adorned with figures of *bas-relief*, representing the

same histories as the paintings do. These were the sepulchres of the most considerable persons; every one of these cemeteries is like a city under ground, and some of them two or three stories deep. In them the Christians found a place of retreat during the persecutions; there they kept the relics of the martyrs; there they met and celebrated the holy offices; nay, and there some of them constantly resided, as is written of many of the popes. The book called *Roma Subterranea* is a description of these ancient cemeteries. They remained, the greatest part of them, for a long time unknown, the entrance into them having been stopped up; and it was but about the end of the sixteenth century that they were discovered. These cemeteries are sometimes called the councils of the martyrs, their bodies being there assembled together, or *arenarea*, from the sandy soil where they were generally placed. In *Africa* they were also called *areæ*.

“They had of old a religious ambition of being buried near to the bodies of the martyrs; and this is that which at last brought so many graves and tombs into the churches; for it was of a long time observed not to bury the dead but without the walls of cities. The veneration they had for relics, and their distinct belief of the resurrection, wore out that aversion among the Christians which the ancients, even the Israelites themselves, had for dead bodies and graves.”

We wait with great interest for a splendid work, already announced, on these catacombs, in which is to be given a complete copy of all the epitaphs and inscriptions, together with coloured plates of the sculpture and paintings of these secret chambers of the sainted dead.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### OF THE FESTIVALS OF THE CHURCH.

#### § 1. PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

SACRED seasons are an institution, not of Christ and his apostles, but of the church. No authority for their observance is derived from the canon of the New Testament; neither do they belong to the apostolical age of the church. The churches established by the apostles, in imitation of our Lord and his disciples, observed the times and seasons of the Jews; but it was particularly the office of the apostle of the Gentiles to admonish the infant church that such observances are not an essential part of religion. He resisted all attempts to impose the yoke of Mosaic ceremonies on Gentile converts. From Jewish converts he removed the oppressive and useless burden of their festivals, and discountenanced the observance of their sacred days.

But in common with the other apostles, this minister of the Gentiles sanctioned the observance of the first day of the week, instead of the seventh, as the Christian Sabbath. This, in obedience to the great command of the Decalogue, was consecrated as holy time; and is in reality the only sacred season of the Christian church. All other times and seasons are carnal ordinances, having no Divine authority. The Christian Sabbath, therefore, ought to have the first, the last, the only place in the calendar of the church. Such is its place in the sacred canon. There it stands apart, separate, distinct from all other days, as holy unto the Lord; and there it should stand fast for ever, in the mild majesty with which Heaven has invested the solemn day. It has no affinity or connection with the innumerable holy days, fasts, and festivals, movable and immovable, with which pious usage and papal superstition has crowded the calendar of the church, and by which this sacred day of the Lord was overlaid and lost for many centuries, until brought forth to light and again restored to its original sanctity by the Puritans of the sixteenth century.

## § 2. OF THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

THE primitive church observed both the Jewish and the Christian Sabbath. The Jewish converts considered the abrogation of the ceremonial law to relate only to their exemption from its burdensome rites; and continued religiously to observe the Sabbath as holy. Converts from paganism, on the contrary, contemplated Christianity as a dispensation altogether new, and the religion of the Jews as totally abrogated. The resurrection of Christ was to them a fixed point, the beginning of this new dispensation, the new *passover* from bondage to freedom, from death to life. This great event they refused to commemorate on the same day which the Jews observed for another end, and for this purpose they selected the first day of the week. The import of the Christian Sabbath they accounted more significant and important than that of the Jewish. The one commemorated the *completion* of the work of creation; the other, the *beginning* of a nobler work by the great Creator himself, who was light and life to all.

'Twas great—to speak the world from naught,

'Twas greater—to redeem.

The early Christian converts, whether pagan or Jewish, seem not to have been conscious when or where or how the ancient economy was abrogated, and the gospel dispensation introduced. But, in process of time, the one was gradually discontinued and fulfilled in the other. *The observance of the Lord's day as the first day of the week was at first introduced as a separate institution.* Both this and the Jewish Sabbath were kept for some time; then the Christian began to take precedence of the Jewish Sabbath; finally, the latter passed wholly over into the former, which now took the place of the ancient Sabbath of the Israelites. But their Sabbath, the last day of the week, was strictly kept in connection with that of the first day, for a long time after the overthrow of the temple and its worship. Down even to the fifth century the observance of the Jewish Sabbath was continued in the Christian church, but with a rigour and solemnity gradually diminishing until it was wholly discontinued.

No historical record, sacred or profane, has informed us of the first celebration of the Lord's day, the first day of the week, as the Christian Sabbath. It doubtless was very early; probably from the first communication of the Holy Spirit on the day of



Pentecost. The first day of the week had been signalized by the resurrection and the ascension of our Lord; and now again in the fulfilment of his promise in the miraculous shedding forth of the Holy Ghost upon his disciples while, in joyful expectation of the event, they were all assembled in one place for the worship of their ascended Saviour. From this time, it is to be presumed, that they continued to meet on this day, for ever memorable by these remarkable events. No law was requisite for this purpose. The impulse of their own hearts was enough to bring them together on each return of this eventful day.

When Paul was at Troas, the disciples came together, apparently according to established custom, on the *first day of the week*, to break bread; on which occasion the apostle preached to them.

The apostle also directs the Corinthians, *on the first day of the week*, to lay aside for charitable purposes a certain sum, according as the Lord had prospered them. Here we have, at least, a distinct notice of the reckoning by weeks. What directed the apostle to specify the *first* day of the week rather than the seventh?

John, in Patmos, was in the spirit on the *Lord's day*. Whence this early and familiar use of the expression to denote a specific day? It is an appellation, descriptive of a certain day, given without explanation, as if well understood and in common use. Here is a fair presumption, if not a conclusive inference, that the day was already known by this name because observed as the Sabbath of the Christian church.

These are all the passages in the New Testament upon which any reliance can be placed as evidence of the religious observance of the Lord's day by the apostolical churches.

Soon after the age of the apostles, the evidence becomes clear and full that the Sabbath was solemnized in the Christian church for religious worship, and kept as holy unto the Lord.

Just after the conclusion of the sacred canon, and the death of John the apostle, a persecution was instituted against the Christians in Bithynia, in Asia Minor. Pliny, the younger, in reporting to the emperor the prosecutions that had been held against them, mentions, that they were accustomed to meet on a certain stated day, *stato die*, before it was light, for the worship of Christ as God. This statement is evidence that these Christians kept a day as holy time, but whether it was the last, or the first day of the week, does not appear.<sup>1</sup>

Justin Martyr, who lived about forty years later, says that they (Christians) neither celebrated the Jewish festivals, nor ob-

served their Sabbaths, nor practised circumcision.<sup>2</sup> In another place he says that they, both those who lived in the city and they who lived in the country, were all accustomed to meet on the day which is denominated Sunday, for the reading of the Scriptures, prayer, exhortation, and communion. The assembly meet on *Sunday*, because this is the first day on which God, having changed the darkness, and the elements, τὸ σκότος καὶ τὴν ὕλην τρέψας, created the world; and because Jesus our Lord on this day arose from the dead.

This sacred day was usually denominated ἡ κυριακή, *dies Dominicus*, the *Lord's day*; but sometimes, also, *Sunday*, *diem solis*, ἡ τοῦ ἡλίου ἡμέρα, in compliance with the common phraseology, and when it was necessary to distinguish the day in addressing the heathen. During the early ages of the church it was never entitled "the Sabbath;" this word being confined to the *seventh day* of the week, the Jewish Sabbath, which, as we have already said, continued to be observed for several centuries by the converts to Christianity.

The author of the Epistle of St. Barnabas introduces the Lord as saying, "The Sabbaths which you now keep are not acceptable to me; but those which I have made, when, resting from all things, I shall begin the eighth day, that is, the beginning of the other world." "For which cause," he adds, "we observe the eighth day with gladness, in which Jesus rose from the dead, and, having manifested himself to his disciples, ascended into heaven."<sup>3</sup>

Tertullian, at the close of the second century, says, "We celebrate Sunday (*diem solis*) as a joyful day." "On the Lord's day (*die Dominico*) we think it wrong to *fast* or to *kneel* in prayer."

"A true Christian," says Clement of Alexandria, contemporary with Tertullian, "according to the commands of the gospel, observes the Lord's day by casting out all bad thoughts, and cherishing all goodness, honouring the resurrection of the Lord, which took place on that day."

Dionysius of Corinth, of the same age, in a letter to the church of Rome, preserved by Eusebius, mentions their faithful observance of the Lord's day, and their reading of the Scriptures on the occasion.

These authorities are sufficient to show that the Lord's day was observed by Christians of the second century for religious worship. The use of the term by those writers may fairly be assumed as explanatory of the same expression in Rev. i. 10, which, in connection with 1 Cor. xvi. 2, and Acts xx. 7, and illustrated by

usage of the church in the age following, justifies the belief that from the beginning the Lord's day has been observed in the Christian church. At first, and for several centuries, it was kept in connection with the Jewish Sabbath; but by degrees the observance of the latter fell into disuse, and the former has ever since continued to be the sacred day of the Christian church.

No law or precept appears to have been given by Christ or the apostles, either for the abrogation of the Jewish Sabbath or the institution of the Lord's day, or the substitution of the first for the seventh day of the week. The reasons for keeping the first day in preference to the seventh, have been already stated from Justin Martyr. They are more fully explained by Leo the Great, of the fifth century:—"On this day the world had its origin. On the same day, through the resurrection of Christ, death came to an end, and life began. It was upon this day also that the apostles were commissioned by the Lord to preach the gospel to every creature, and to offer to all the world the blessings of salvation. On the same day came Christ into the midst of his disciples and breathed upon them, saying, 'Receive the Holy Ghost.' And finally on this day the Holy Ghost was shed forth upon the apostles! So that we see as it were an ordinance from Heaven evidently set before us, showing that on this day, on which all the gifts of God's grace have been vouchsafed, we ought to celebrate the solemnities of Christian worship."

But the most decisive and satisfactory authority on this subject is perhaps that of Eusebius, who, in his Commentary on the ninety-first (xcii.) Psalm, says—

"The Word [Christ] by the new covenant translated and transferred the feast of the Sabbath to the morning light, and gave us the symbol of true rest—the *saving Lord's day*—the first [day] of light in which the Saviour obtained the victory over death, &c. On this day, which is the first of the Light and of the true Sun, we assemble after an interval of six days, and celebrate holy and spiritual Sabbath: even all nations redeemed by Him throughout the world, assemble, and do those things according to the spiritual law which were decreed for the priests to do on the Sabbath: all things which it was duty to do on the Sabbath, [*i. e.* the Jewish Sabbath,] *these we have transferred to the LORD'S DAY*, as more appropriately belonging to it, because it has the precedence, and is first in rank, and more honorable than the Jewish Sabbath. It is delivered to us, παραδίδοται, handed down by tradition, that

we should meet together on this day, and it is evidence that we should do these things announced in this Psalm."<sup>4</sup> (Ps. xcii.)

In process of time the Christian Sabbath took the name of the *Lord's day* to distinguish it from the Jewish Sabbath; or, as Chrysostom informs us, because "the Lord arose from the dead on this day." Ignatius appears to be the first, subsequent to the author of Revelation, to designate it by this appellation.<sup>5</sup>

In this review of the development of the Christian Sabbath, one cannot fail to recognise the Divine guidance of that good Spirit which leads into all truth. Under this peculiar oversight, the observance of the Lord's day was ordered, while yet the Sabbath of the Jews was continued; nor was the latter superseded until the former had acquired the same solemnity and importance which belonged, at first, to that great day which God originally ordained and blessed. The design and end of both was indeed the same, the extension of God's grace to man. The Lord's day was, in reality, the same to the people of God under the new dispensation, that the Sabbath was to the people of Israel. Each was the great central point of its own dispensation respectively, the cardinal principle in the system, and the chief means of the spiritual edification of the people.

No sooner was Constantine established upon the throne, than he began to bestow special care upon the observance of the Lord's day. He required his armies to spend the day in devotional exercises. No courts of judicature were to be held on this day; no suits or trials in law prosecuted; but, at the same time, works of mercy, such as the emancipation of slaves, were declared lawful. Subsequently, Christian emperors confirmed and extended these decrees. All public shows, theatrical exhibitions, dancing, and amusements were strictly prohibited. Similar decrees were also passed by various councils, requiring a faithful attendance upon public worship, and a strict observance of the day, by solemn suspension of all secular pursuits and abstinence from amusements and vain recreations. The Council of Laodicea, c. 29, about the same time forbade the observance of the Jewish Sabbath.

The historical facts in regard to the observance both of the ancient Sabbath and of the Lord's day as holy time, may be summed up in the following particulars:—

1. Both were observed in the Christian church down to the fifth century, with this difference, that in the Eastern church both days were regarded as joyful occasions, but in the Western the Jewish Sabbath was kept as a fast.



2. Both were solemnized by public religious assemblies for the instruction and spiritual edification of the hearers and for the celebration of the Lord's supper.

3. The Sabbath of the Jews was kept chiefly by converts from that people and on their own account; who, though freed from the bondage of the law, adhered in this respect to the custom of their fathers. But in time, after the Lord's day was fully established, the observance of the Sabbath of the Jews was gradually discontinued, and finally was denounced as heretical. As the light of the morning star gently fades before the rising sun, yet both lingering awhile together in the horizon, each subserving alike the will of Heaven, and conspiring to a common end; so the Jewish and the Christian Sabbath, these lights of the moral world, in harmonious action fulfilled their original destiny; the lesser continually waning before the increasing splendour of the greater light.

But it is not a little singular that the church, though right in theory, and to some extent in practice, continued through successive centuries down to the age of the Reformation, and even beyond it, wrong *in principle*, in that she disowned the sanctity of *the law* of the Sabbath. In other words, the Divine authority of the Sabbath neither was recognised by the ancient fathers, nor by Luther or Calvin or by the early Reformers. It was reserved for the Puritans, to their immortal honour, first to expound and enforce the law of the Christian Sabbath, based on the authority of God's word. They better read the law of the Lord our God on this subject, and bringing it out from the enormous mass of saints' days and festivals with which the church had overlaid it, like some priceless gem disinterred from the rubbish of many generations, presented it to the gaze and admiration of the world radiant with heaven's own lustre. The influence of the sun in the heavens is not more clear or genial than is that of the Christian Sabbath upon the whole English race wherever found. They and they alone have a Sabbath, a Christian Sabbath, holy unto the Lord, by God's command. With all else throughout Christendom the Sabbath is a holiday, a festival, observed by common consent like other saints' days and festivals of the calendar.

The true doctrine of the Christian Sabbath was first promulgated by an English dissenter, the Rev. Nicholas Bound, D. D., of Norton, in the county of Suffolk. About the year 1595, he published a famous book, entitled "*Sabbathum Veteris et Novi Testamenti*, or *The True Doctrine of the Sabbath*." In this book



he maintained "that the seventh part of our time ought to be devoted to God—that Christians are bound to rest on the Lord's day as much as the Jews were on the Mosaic Sabbath, the commandment about rest being moral and perpetual; and that it was not lawful for persons to follow their studies or worldly business on that day, nor to use such pleasures and recreations as are permitted on other days." This book spread with wonderful rapidity. The doctrines which it propounded called forth from many hearts a ready response, and the result was a most pleasing reformation in many parts of the kingdom. "It is almost incredible," says Fuller, "how taking this doctrine was, partly because of its own purity, and partly for the eminent piety of such persons as maintained it; so that the Lord's day, especially in corporations, began to be precisely kept; people becoming a law unto themselves, forbearing such sports as yet by statute permitted; yea, many rejoicing at their own restraint herein." The law of the Sabbath was indeed a religious principle, after which the Christian church had, for centuries, been darkly groping. Pious men, of every age, had felt the necessity of Divine authority for sanctifying the day. Their conscience had been in advance of their reason. Practically they had kept the Sabbath better than their principles required.

Public sentiment, however, was still unsettled in regard to this new doctrine respecting the Sabbath, though few at first violently opposed it. "Learned men were much divided in their judgments about these Sabbatarian doctrines; some embraced them as ancient truths consonant to Scripture, long disused and neglected, now seasonably revived for the increase of piety. Others conceived them grounded on a wrong bottom; but because they tended to the manifest advance of religion, it was a pity to oppose them; seeing none have just reason to complain, being deceived into their own good. But a third sort flatly fell out with these propositions, as galling men's necks with a *Jewish yoke*, against the liberty of Christians; that Christ, as Lord of the Sabbath, had removed the rigour thereof, and allowed men lawful recreations; that *this doctrine put an unequal lustre on the Sunday*, on set purpose to eclipse all other holy days, to the derogation of the authority of the church; that this strict observance was set up out of faction, to be a character of difference to brand all for libertines who did not entertain it."

No open opposition, however, was at first manifested against the sentiments of Dr. Bound. No reply was attempted for several

years; and "not so much as a feather of a quill in print did wag against him." His work was soon followed by several other treatises in defence of the same sentiments. "All the Puritans fell in with this doctrine and distinguished themselves by spending that part of sacred time in public, family, and private devotion." Even Dr. Heylin certified the triumphant spread of those puritanical sentiments respecting the Sabbath, while he disclosed his inveterate hatred of them in the following terms:—"This doctrine, carrying such a fair show of piety, at least in the opinion of the common people, and such as did not examine the true grounds of it, induced many to embrace and defend it; and in a very little time it became the most bewitching error and the most popular infatuation that ever was embraced by the people of England."

Such hostility to the doctrine soon became general on the part of the established clergy. Without attempting a refutation of the doctrine, "they exclaimed against it as putting a restraint upon Christian liberty; as putting too great a lustre upon the Lord's day; and as tending to eclipse the authority of the church in attending festivals."

Mr. Thomas Rogers, author of a commentary on the Thirty-nine Articles, was the first to attempt a public refutation of these puritanical notions respecting the Sabbath. The doctrine of the Puritans he characterizes as an "odde and new device of theirs," and he charges them with setting forth "from an odde corner and after a new fashion, which we little thought of, their Sabbath speculations. Such was their cunning set upon us afresh again, by dispersing them in printed books, which for ten years' space before, they had been in hammering among themselves to make them compleat." In conclusion, the worthy churchman proposes to himself the rare consolations of his death-bed, derived from the vain hope with which he flattered himself that he had utterly suppressed this dangerous tenet. "It is a comfort to my soul, and will be to my dying hour, that I have been the man and the means that the Sabbatarian errors and impieties are brought into the knowledge of the state." Archbishop Whitgift, in 1599, suppressed Dr. Bound's book, and ordered that it should not be reprinted. And Popham, lord chief justice, did the same the year following. "These, indeed," says Dr. Heylin, "were good remedies, had they been soon enough applied; yet not so good as those which were formerly applied to Coppin and Thacker, who were hanged at Bury for spreading Brown's books against the

church." Such was the amiable spirit of these Christian men toward those who plead for a religious observance of the Christian Sabbath.

But these efforts at extermination only propagated more extensively the scriptural doctrine of the Sabbath. Though condemned by the chief justice, says Fuller, "these Sabbatarian doctrines took the privilege to pardon themselves, and were published more generally than before. The price of the doctor's book began to be doubled, as commonly books are then most called on when called in; and many who hear not of them when printed, inquire after them when prohibited; and though the book's wings were clipt from flying abroad in print, it ran the faster from friend to friend in transcribed copies; and the Lord's day in most places was most strictly observed." Whitgift died soon after the suppression of the book, and, in 1606, Dr. Bound published a second edition of his book with large additions. "And, indeed, such was its reputation that scarcely any catechism or comment was published by the stricter divines for many years, in which the morality of the Sabbath was not strongly recommended and enforced." The subject, indeed, became the principal controversy of the age. It changed to a great extent the topics of discussion in the church. Hitherto the dispute of contending parties had been about the *ceremonials* of religion; now it was directed to the *doctrines* of the Scriptures. Among these that of the Christian Sabbath was first in order and importance.

The subject continued to be discussed for many years. Public enactments were made to contravene these puritanical notions of the sanctity of the Lord's day. For this intent, in the famous Declaration of Sports, May 24, 1618, James I. signified his royal pleasure "that after the end of divine service his good people should not be disturbed, letted, or discouraged from any lawful recreations; such as dancing either of men or women, archerie for men, leaping or vaulting, or any such harmless recreations; nor from having May-games, Whitsun-ales, or morris-dances, and setting up of May-poles, or other sports therewith used, so as the same be had in due and convenient times without impediment or let of divine service."

This declaration opened a flood of immorality upon the country, and brought into great trials such as opposed this public desecration of the Lord's day. Archbishop Laud, ever memorable for his vindictive hatred of the Puritans, distinguished himself by his zeal against the new doctrine of the sanctity of the day. At the

request of the people the lord chief justice Richardson had ordered the suppression of "Sunday revels." But Laud had the address to call in the aid of the clergy to cause the order of the chief justice to be revoked which suppressed the revels, against which the people complained, as not only introducing "a great profanation of the Lord's day, but riotous tippling, contempt of authority, quarrels, murders," etc. A spectacle most extraordinary, the *laity* petitioning for the religious observance of the Lord's day, and the *bishop of Protestant England and his clergy* pleading for the authorized profanation of it! Laud and his party prevailed; the order was revoked, and the Declaration of Sports renewed, "*out of a pious care for the service of God and for suppressing those humours that oppose truth, and for the ease, comfort, and recreation of his majesty's well-deserving people.*"

Many of the stern defenders of the sanctity of the Sabbath refused to publish the king's declaration, and were ejected from their livings: others were prosecuted, imprisoned, and suffered the loss of all things, just for conscientiously remembering the Sabbath day. Mr. Prynne, the chronologist of these troublous times, dismisses this subject by saying, "It were endless to go into more particulars; how many hundred ministers, in this and other dioceses, have been suspended from their ministry, sequestered, driven from their livings, excommunicated, persecuted in the high commission, and forced to leave the kingdom, for not publishing this declaration, is experimentally known to all men."

Opposition, however, gradually ceased; better sentiments prevailed, and the church of England was at length constrained to receive the scriptural doctrine of the sanctity of the Lord's day at the hands of the persecuted Puritans. Accordingly, England, Scotland, and America, and they only, of all the nations of Christendom, enjoy a Christian Sabbath.

### § 3. OF THE SACRED SEASONS OF THE ANCIENT CHURCH.

THE ancient church were not careful to prescribe a specific time or place for the celebration of their religious festivals. These seasons were regarded as *sacred*, not for any peculiar sanctity belonging to the day, or hour, in which they were solemnized, in itself considered, but merely as being set apart from a common to a religious use.<sup>1</sup>

All the early religious festivals of the church were at first observed as a voluntary, not as an imperative duty. The views of



the ancient church on this subject are expressed by the historian Socrates, in his remarks on the celebration of Easter:—

“It appears to me that neither the ancients nor moderns who have affected to follow the Jews, have any rational foundation for contending so obstinately about it. For they have altogether lost sight of the fact, that when our religion superseded the Jewish economy, the obligation to observe the Mosaic law and the ceremonial types ceased. That it is incompatible with Christian faith to practise Jewish rites is manifest from the apostles expressly forbidding it, and not only rejecting circumcision, but deprecating contention about festival days. In his Epistle to the Galatians, he writes, ‘Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?’ And continuing his strain of argument, he demonstrates that the Jews were in bondage as servants, but that the Christians were called into the liberty of sons. Moreover, he exhorts them to disregard days, months, and years. Again, in his Epistle to the Colossians, he distinctly declares that such observances are mere shadows, wherefore ‘Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of any holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come.’ The same truths are also confirmed in his Epistle to the Hebrews: ‘For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change of the law.’ Neither the apostle, therefore, nor the evangelists, have anywhere imposed the yoke of servitude on those who have embraced the gospel; but have left Easter, and every other feast, to be honoured by the gratitude of the recipients of grace.

“Men love festivals because they afford them cessation from labour; and therefore it is that each individual, in every place, according to his own pleasure, has, by a prevalent custom, celebrated the memory of the saving Passion. The Saviour and his apostles have enjoined us by no law to keep this feast; nor in the New Testament are we threatened with any penalty, punishment, or curse for the neglect of it, as the Mosaic law does the Jews. It is merely for the sake of historical accuracy, and for the reproach of the Jews, because they polluted themselves with blood on their very feasts, that it is narrated in the gospels that Jesus suffered ‘in the days of unleavened bread.’ The apostles had no thought of appointing festival-days, but of promoting a life of blamelessness and piety. And it seems to me that the feast of Easter has been introduced into the church from some old usage, just as many other customs have been established.”<sup>2</sup>

The number of religious festivals was at first small. The most



ancient rubrics mention only those of the Passion, of Easter, and of Whitsunday, commemorative of the death and resurrection of Christ, and the descent of the Holy Spirit. Christmas was not observed as a sacred religious festival until the fourth century, when it became customary to observe saints' days; among which, this was the most sacred. The earliest authorities on this point, are Clemens of Alexandria, Origen, and Jerome, as quoted above. Chemnitz, on the Council of Trent, affirms that, for four hundred years, the festivals of the church were, 1. The Lord's day; 2. That of the Passion; 3. Of the Resurrection; 4. The Ascension; 5. Pentecost; 6. The Nativity and Baptism of Christ.\* For later acts of councils, see references.<sup>3</sup>

The festivals of the Christian church resolve themselves into three grand divisions, in each of which there is one great festival bearing a peculiar relation to the others of the same class, as their common centre. These great festivals are Christmas, Easter, and Whitsunday. Of these the first two relate to the scenes of Christ's humiliation on earth; the last to his glorious exaltation and power as displayed in the shedding forth of the Holy Spirit. Each of these feasts is preceded by preparatory rites, and followed by corresponding festivities. So that from the first of December to the Sunday of Whitsuntide these successive solemnities form a connected representation of the leading events in the life of our Lord, from his incarnation to his triumphant ascension. He became flesh and dwelt among us, subject to all the infirmities of our nature; he suffered and died; and arose in glorious power, whereby he is able to provide for all his followers to the end of the world. These are the great truths in our Lord's history which this series of festivals commemorates.

Christmas commemorates the birth of Christ; God himself becoming man. This great event indeed is represented by two solemnities; the *birth* of Jesus on the twenty-fifth of December, when this Divine Being entered on his earthly existence, and became subject to all the infirmities of human nature; and the day of his *baptism* on the sixth of January, when he first manifested himself as Christ, the promised Messiah. On this occasion his Divine power and glory were publicly revealed; and, for this reason, the day is styled Epiphany, the manifestation.

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\* Primitivo igitur et veteris ecclesiæ festa per annos quodringentos, hæc fuerunt; primo, dies Dominica; secundo, festum passionis Christi (Parascave); tertio, resurrectionis; quarto, ascensionis; quinto, pentecostes; sexto, nativitatibus et baptismi Christi.

The observance of the birth of Christ as a religious festival began in the fourth century in the church of Rome, and subsequently in the Eastern church, on the twenty-fifth of December. By this solemnity it was proclaimed how the eternal Word became flesh ; and how, by becoming man, he made it possible for man himself to become like God himself. But in addition to this union between God and man, Jesus, by being born of a woman, exhibited also the tenderest of all human relations, that of parent and child. Christmas therefore is a festive celebration expressive of the happiness of the human family, and of the purest relations of domestic life.

Since the fourth century it has been customary to celebrate, on the twenty-sixth of December, the death of Stephen the first martyr, as standing nearest the manger of the infant Saviour. The *death* of the martyr was, according to the phraseology of the ancient church, his birthday. Hence the familiar saying of the fathers: "Heri natus est Christus in terris, ut hodie Stephanus nasceretur in cœlis."

Next followed the memorial of John, the beloved disciple, which naturally connected itself with that of the birth of Christ. He especially taught us that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. He was also a martyr ; not indeed like Stephen, but in a spiritual sense. For it was the custom of the church to reckon all as martyrs who fearlessly stood up as witnesses for the truth, not counting their own lives dear unto them, though they may at length have died a natural death.

As these days commemorate those who testified their love for Christ, the one by a long life of undeviating fidelity, and the other by an heroic death, so another commemorates those who, in tender, unconscious childhood, yielded up their lives for the preservation of the infant Saviour. The twenty-eighth of December, Innocents' day, was set apart in memory of the innocent children who suffered death by the jealous cruelty of Herod. Thus these martyr-feasts are connected with that of the birth of Christ. This connection illustrates the deep earnestness with which the ancient church regarded the death of Christ.

Between the day of the birth of Christ and of his manifestation, there is another which commemorates an important event of his life,—his circumcision. *Festum circumcisionis et nominis Jesu.* The later fathers of the church connected with the observance of this day the festivities of the new-year's day, by which means it was dishonoured by many wanton and extravagant rites adopted from heathen nations.

The feast of Epiphany concluded the solemnities connected with that of the birth of Christ. This is an ancient oriental festival; and may have been established, through the influence of the Gnostics, as early as the second century.

In the sixth century, the feast of purification, or of the presentation of Christ in the temple, was added to those which are connected with Christmas. The time of holding this feast, styled Candlemas, from the number of lights which were borne in procession on the occasion, was necessarily determined by that of Christmas on the twenty-fifth of December.

The solemnities of Easter stand in close connection with those of Christmas. Of the historical origin of this feast there can be no doubt. With essential variations, it sprang from the Passover, the great festival of the Jews, to which it retains many striking analogies. It is the most ancient and the most significant of all the festivals of the Christian church. It commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. This momentous event, so important in the scheme of grace, is signalized, both by this great annual festival, and by the weekly observance of the Lord's day.

This great festive season is preceded by a preparatory fast of forty days, the carnival, *caro vale!*

The solemnities immediately connected with Easter begin with Palm Sunday; commemorative of our Lord's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, when the enthusiastic multitude strewed palms in the way before him. The tragedy begins with a triumphal procession; unnatural, indeed, and inconsistent, because merely an earthly triumph; and oh! how unlike that of the Eternal King on his entry into the city of the New Jerusalem above. The shouts of the tumultuous assembly and their loud hosannas are soon to be exchanged, by the malice of the priests, for their maledictions and phrenzied exclamations of rage. And yet the blessed Saviour, meekly submissive to his Father's will, calmly proceeds, in full consciousness of all this, to meet his certain death.

First of all he institutes the Lord's supper, expressive of the grace of God, and the fellowship of saints. The memory of this transaction is perpetuated by Maunday Thursday, *dies mysteriorum, dies natalis—calicis, dies viridum, etc.*

Then follows that day of awful suffering, and of amazing grace, when Jesus died upon the cross for the sins of the world,—*Good Friday*. It is expressive of the surpassing love of Christ in dying for the salvation of man. But the benevolent ends of this sacrifice

were accomplished by mysterious sufferings. All was darkness and gloom. The sun itself was shrouded in darkness. All nature, in sympathy with the sufferings of the great Deliverer, gave signs of wo. How much deeper then the sorrow with which the heart of man should be touched on this occasion. Hence the expressive silence and sadness with which the day is solemnized.

Saturday following was named the Great, or Holy Sabbath. On this day the Lord lay in his grave, and rested from the great work of redemption, as also on the night following. This night was also observed with peculiar solemnity, that sacred night of all nights. The church assembled in silent sadness, and passed its mournful vigils in watching, in prayer, and in torch-light processions. In connection with this solemnity the ancient church was accustomed to foreshadow, by peculiar rites, the second coming of the Son of man.

But when the morning dawned, oh, what a morning! It was announced with the triumphant exclamation, The Lord is risen! yes, verily the Lord is risen indeed, was the universal response. Easter now is fully come. Easter, that day of joy, of salvation, that royal, triumphant day; that day of light, of life, and of salvation, that feast of feasts. Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. The ancient dispensation has passed away; and the new now begins. For this reason the ancient church began the new year with this day. In like manner, the Christian sabbath, the resurrection day, is not, like the Jewish, the conclusion of the seven days, but the beginning of a new week.

The conclusion of Easter was Whitsunday, *Dominica in albis, dies neophytorum*, etc. On this day the neophytes, candidates for church-membership, were received into full communion by appropriate solemnities, after which they laid aside the white garments with which they had been clad, and in which they appeared in public on this occasion.

The cycle of Whitsunday commemorates the complete manifestation and exaltation of Jesus Christ. His earthly course is completed; he lives indeed still, but only as our risen Lord. As with the Jews the interval between the Passover and Pentecost was holy time, so also with Christians, the seven weeks between Easter and Whitsunday were religiously observed. It was the favourite time for solemnizing the right of baptism. As a symbolical representation of the resurrection of Christ, all were accustomed, during this interval, to stand in prayer. The Acts of the Apostles were read and expounded, because this book particularly treats of his resur



rection. None fasted during this season. Business was, as much as possible, suspended, and the time devoted to festivity as a prolonged thanksgiving. In a word, the whole was a joyous Sunday, a religious holiday, a prolonged echo of the acclamation of the resurrection morning.

The last of all these days relating to our Lord's mission on earth was the Ascension, when the life of Jesus, which began in the manger, ended in the glories of heaven.

#### § 4. OF THE CORRUPT ORIGIN AND INFLUENCE OF THE FESTIVALS OF THE CHURCH.

IN the institution of these festivals reference was had sometimes to the seasons of the year, sometimes to the festivals of the Jews, and at other times to the festivals of pagan nations.<sup>1</sup> These festivals of the church accordingly became an incongruous mixture of Judaism, paganism, and Christianity. As men are known by their gods, so the character of their religion is manifested by their festivals. The degenerate character of the church is partially indicated in this blending of heathen festivals and Jewish observances with religious festivals. These festivals had their origin in a corrupt age of the church, and are a manifest token of degeneracy.

As early as the third and fourth centuries, the church began to manifest an attachment both to Jewish and to pagan forms and ceremonies. The original simplicity of Christian worship, adapted to a spiritual religion, became unsatisfactory. The multitude craved an outward religion, that should address itself to the senses rather than to the heart; something that should amuse and divert, and appease the religious propensities of men without disturbing them in their sins. Such external attractions the church sought to give to her religion by the establishment of new festivals, and by converting Jewish and heathen ceremonies into Christian solemnities. Accordingly, many such observances were adopted into Christian worship in the sixth century, under Gregory the Great, from the Jewish and heathen rituals.<sup>2</sup>

This propensity discovered itself at an earlier period, and was often censured, but it only increased with the progress of degeneracy.

The commemoration of martyrs and confessors led to the establishment of numerous festivals in honour of saints, and many other superstitions connected with sacred relics, invocations, and pilgrimages.

The introduction of the observance of Christmas in the fourth century, led the way to many other festivals, as has been already



intimated. These and kindred causes sufficiently account for the continuous and enormous multiplication of fasts and festivals under the papacy. "Within two hundred years from the death of Chrysostom, Mahomet broke upon the world, and the tempest which he raised came *as a blast of health upon the nations*. What Mahomet and his caliphs found in all directions where their scimetars cut a path for them, was a superstition so abject, an idolatry so gross and shameless, church doctrines so arrogant, church practices so dissolute and puerile, that the strong-minded Arabians felt themselves inspired anew as God's messengers, to reprove the error of the world, and authorized as God's avengers to punish apostate Christendom."<sup>3</sup> This was the age of festivals and fasts, with which the calendar became so crowded, that the cycle of the entire year presents scarcely a single day which was not commemorated by some of those solemn puerilities of papal superstition.

#### § 5. OF THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE CALENDAR.

THE reckoning of chronology by the *Christian era* was introduced in the sixth century by Dionysius, a Roman abbot, and in the seventh and eighth centuries was denominated *the Dyonisianera*. Previous to the introduction of this system of chronology, time was reckoned by the Jews from the creation of the world, by the Romans from the founding of Rome, or by consulships, or by the reign of their emperors. The calendar was revised by Julius Cæsar, forty-five years before Christ, and the year made to begin on the first of January instead of the first of March. The Dionysian era began A. D. 531, but it has been subject to certain modifications, of which the most important are the correction of the epact, and the reduction from the 25th of March to the 25th of December.

It is not distinctly known when the reckoning of time by an *ecclesiastical* year began in the church. The Jews had a civil year, which dated from the creation of the world, and began on the first day of the month Tisri, corresponding to the first half of September, and styled ראש השנה. Their ecclesiastic or *religious* year, having the same name, began the first of the month Nisan, corresponding with the latter part of March. The Passover followed immediately, and all their festivals were reckoned from this date. From the authorities quoted in the above reference, it is probable that the ecclesiastical year in the Christian church was adopted from the Jewish, and corresponded with it. In the fifth century the

feast of the *Annunciation*, March 25th, which also has an intimate relation to the 25th of December, was accounted the beginning of the ecclesiastical year, corresponding very nearly with the religious reckoning of the Jews. This became a fixed point for the church from which to date all their festivals, or as Chrysostom expresses it, it was *πρώτη καὶ ῥίζα τῶν ἑορτῶν τοῦ Χριστοῦ*. This feast, according to the Council of Toletum, x. c. 1, was to be held on the 13th of December, on the last Sabbath of Christmas, as in Milan; or on the 5th or 6th of January, as in the Ethiopian and Armenian churches respectively. In France it was observed on the 25th of March as late as the sixteenth century, and in England even down to the eighteenth century.

The Western church generally may very naturally be supposed to date their ecclesiastical year from the advent of Christ, in imitation of the church at Rome. Between the seventh and ninth centuries this festival was extended to include *six* sabbath days. This number was afterward reduced.

The Eastern church, like the Western, celebrated the advent for a series of days, but differed entirely from that church in the reckoning of their religious year. This they began from the feast on the erection of the cross, *crouch-mas-day*, September 14th.

This mode of reckoning time, by *ecclesiastical* and *civil* years, must have caused much confusion and inconvenience. And some important reasons must have led to the adoption of a system of chronology so complicated and inconvenient. The primitive church were probably influenced in their adherence to this arrangement by their desire to embrace in their sacred seasons all the leading incidents of our Saviour's life. The Julian reckoning of time from the first of January they rejected, because of its relation to pagan chronology. For many centuries this day was stigmatized by them as a day for fasting and penance, or as a day fit only to be observed by fools and hypochondriacs, the observance of which was forbidden by various ecclesiastical councils in the sixth and seventh centuries.<sup>1</sup>

The names of months and weeks, and the consequent division of time by them, the church in general derived from the Roman calendar. But they rejected the names of January and February as being associated with paganism. For the same reason they rejected the reckoning by calends, nones, and ides. They divided the year into fifty-two weeks, and gave to each a specific name, as *hebdomas magna*, *hebdomas authentica*, *muta*, *pœnosa*, *luctuosa*, *crucis*, *indulgentiæ*, *paschalis*, *pentecostalis*, *trinitatis*, etc. They

uniformly began the week *on Sunday*, which they styled the *Lord's day*, κυριακή ἡμέρα, and the weeks which followed were denominated, Advent, Epiphany, etc. They manifested the same zealous opposition to paganism by rejecting the Roman names of the days of the week, Monday, Tuesday, *dies lunæ, martis*, etc., each being named after some pagan god. Some ascetics retained Sunday, *dies solis*, but only in a *mystical sense*, relating to the Sun of righteousness. But the names of the others they uniformly refused and substituted in their place the appellations *feria prima, secunda*, etc., for Monday, Tuesday, etc.\*

The festivals of the church are divided into the following classes: *weekly* and *annual*; *movable*, and *immovable*, *i. e.* fixed to a certain day of the month on which they always occur; *higher*, *middle*, and *lower*; *universal* and *particular*; *ancient* and *modern*; *civil* and *ecclesiastical*; *secular* and *religious*.

It is worthy of remark, that by the *nativity*, τὰ γενέθλια, the church generally denoted not the natural *birth*, but the *death* of the person commemorated by the festival, the deceased being supposed *at death to be born to a new and nobler state of being*. The nativity however of our Lord, of John the Baptist, and of the Virgin Mary, is to be understood in its appropriate and obvious signification.

## § 6. OF THE SPECIFIC SOLEMNITIES AND FEASTS OF THE CHURCH.

1. *Easter*, commemoration both of the death and the resurrection of Christ. This was the most ancient of all the festivals of the church. Unlike the Christmas festival, it was a *movable feast*, restricted to no prescribed day. The Jewish Christians regarded it as their passover, and connected with it another observance commemorative of the resurrection. Gentile Christians observed the weekly Sabbath in commemoration of the resurrection of Christ, and Friday preceding as a memorial of his death, setting aside the Jewish idea of the passover. The Jewish idea of the passover prevailed in the East, the Gentile view in Rome and generally in the Western churches. These conflicting views gave

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\* It is a little singular that our names of the days of the week had an origin similar to that which was so obnoxious to the primitive church, as may be seen by observing their Saxon origin. *Sunnadaeg*, Sun's day; *Monandaeg*, Moon's day; *Tuesdaeg*, day of Tuscio, *i. e.* Mars; *Wodensdaeg*, day of Woden, or Odin, a northern deity; *Torsdaeg*, day of Thor, a deity answering to Jupiter; *Frydaeg*, day of Frigg, the Venus of the North; *Saeterdaeg*, day of Sacter, *i. e.* Saturn.

rise in the second century to a formal and protracted controversy between the Eastern and the Western church, and became the occasion of bitter hostility between them. The details of this controversy the reader will find in the histories of this period of the church.

The feast of Easter was introduced by a season of *fasting*, sometimes of forty days, like our Lord's fast in the wilderness, Matt. iv. 2, or of Moses, Ex. xxxiv. 28. This was styled the *quadragesima*. Sometimes the fast continued one or more days, or *forty hours*, and then again expanded to three, to six, and even to seven weeks. It was finally settled at forty days, commencing on Wednesday of the seventh week before Easter, and excluding the intermediate Sundays, called Sundays *in* Lent, not *of* Lent. This fast, styled the *Carnival*, from *caro vale*, began with *Ash Wednesday* and ended with the Saturday before Easter. The carnival of the Italians is a *festival* which precedes the fast of Lent, but that fast is itself the carnival of church history.

The entire week before Easter, beginning with Palm Sunday, was kept as holy time; but the fifth, sixth, and seventh were regarded as peculiarly sacred above the other days of this week. The week was denominated the *great week* and *passion week*.

The name of *Ash Wednesday* is derived from a superstitious custom of the Romish church. A quantity of ashes is consecrated and then sprinkled over the heads of the congregation, while the admonition is given in Latin, *Remember—"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."*

*Maunday Thursday*.—This was the fifth day of passion week, called also *dies mandati*, *dies mysteriorum*, *eucharistiæ*, *panis*, *indulgentiæ*, etc. It was observed by the celebration of the Lord's supper, and for a long time after the ancient love-feasts were discontinued, this day was observed as a *feast of love*. With these ceremonies was also joined that of washing the feet by catechumens and candidates for baptism. The creed was also publicly rehearsed by them on this day, and pardon was extended to the penitent, hence called *dies indulgentiæ*.

*Good Friday*.—This was the sixth day of passion week, so called from the *good* derived from the death of Christ. The day was observed as a strict fast. The customary acclamations and doxologies were omitted, and nothing but the most plaintive strains of music, such as *κύριε ἑλέησον*, etc., were allowed. No bell was rung on this occasion. None bowed the knee in prayer, because



thus the Jews reviled Jesus. Matt. xxvii. 29. Neither did any present the kiss of charity, for Judas betrayed his Lord with a kiss. The sacramental elements were not consecrated, the altars were divested of their ornaments, and the gospel of John was read, because he was a faithful and true witness of our Lord's passion.

The seventh day of this week, the Great Sabbath, as it was called, was observed with rigorous precision as a day of fasting. Religious worship was celebrated *by night*, and the vigils of the night were continued until cock-crowing, the hour when the Lord was supposed to have arisen. At this instant the stillness of these midnight vigils was suddenly interrupted by the joyful acclamation, The Lord is risen, the Lord is risen! the Lord is risen indeed!

This day was particularly set apart for administering the ordinance of baptism, with a reference to the *baptism* wherewith Christ was at this time baptized, and for the consecration of the holy water. The Scripture lessons for this day were various selections from the prophets.

The day of Easter was celebrated with every demonstration of joy as a second jubilee. In connection with appropriate devotional exercises, it was customary to celebrate the day by deeds of charity and mercy—by granting liberty to the captive, freedom to the slave, and pardon to the criminals. Charities were dispensed to the needy. Courts of justice were suspended. Each participated in the general joy and felt his bosom swell with the “wide wish of benevolence.”

The week following Easter, *Octave of Easter*, was observed as a continuation of the festival. The time was spent in reading the Scriptures, celebrating the mysteries, and other appropriate exercises. During this time, they who had been baptized at Easter appeared arrayed *in white*, in token of that purity of life to which they were bound by their baptismal vows. On the Sabbath following, *Dominica in albis*, they laid aside their garments of white, and after this became integral members of the church. The day was called *White Sunday* from their appearing in white for the last time.

Ascension day occurs first in the Apostolical Constitutions, viii. c. 33, as one of the solemnities connected with Easter.

Trinity Sunday is of late and uncertain origin. To this cycle belong then Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Eve, and the Octave of Easter.



2. *Whitsuntide, Whit Sunday, Pentecost*, commemorative of the outpouring of the Spirit, an early festival of the church, mentioned by Irenæus<sup>1</sup> and Tertullian,<sup>2</sup> of the second century. It continued fifty days, covering the time between Easter and Whitsuntide; and then again its application is restricted to that particular time which perpetuated the memory of the descent of the Holy Spirit. It is in reality a continuation of the great feast of Easter, just as the resurrection and ascension, and descent of the Spirit are connected in the economy of grace. This cycle begins with the feast of the Ascension and ends with the Octave of Easter.

3. *Christmas*.—This is generally agreed to have had its origin in the fourth century. The festival begins with the *Advent* on the last of November, and continues until *Epiphany*, January 6th. But both the Latin and Greek church, since the latter end of the fourth century, have agreed in observing the 25th of December more particularly. The Advent is preliminary and preparatory to this, and the Epiphany closes this sacred festival in honour of the incarnate Saviour. Many, misled by the term ἀφιξίς, *advent*, as it occurs in the earliest of the fathers, have supposed that the Advent, as a festival, was of apostolic origin; whereas the first authentic mention of it as such is in the Council of Mascon, c. 3, A. D. 582.

In regard to the Nativity, it appears, from an oration of Chrysostom on this occasion in the year 386, that this festival had been introduced *ten years* before, for the first time, into Antioch and Syria, and that others claimed for it a high antiquity, asserting that it was known from Thrace even unto Spain.<sup>3</sup> Epiphany was observed at an early period; Christ's entrance upon his public ministry being an event of greater interest than that of his birth, Clemens Alexandrinus censures those who seek too anxiously the Saviour's birth.<sup>4</sup> He is the first who makes mention of the feast of Epiphany.

Augustin recommends a suitable *remembrance* of Christmas, but does not honour it as a solemn festival. He expressly asserts that the church, by common consent, held it on the 25th of December.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, it may be confidently affirmed that in the third century, and the first half of the fourth, the church was not agreed either in regard to the time or reasons for observing this festival; and that the Eastern and Western churches differed totally in their manner of celebrating it. About the end of the fourth century it was finally agreed that Christmas and Epiphany should be observed as two distinct festivals, the one on the 25th

of December, the other on the 6th of January.<sup>6</sup> From that time this arrangement has been very generally observed.

The festivals connected with the cycle of the Nativity are St. Stephen's day, St. John the Baptist's day, the Innocents' day, the Circumcision, the Epiphany, and the Purification.

4. *Festivals in honour of the Virgin Mary.*—No instance of divine honour paid to Mary is recorded of an earlier date than the fifth century. Cyril of Alexandria and Proklus of Constantinople were the first to pay these honours to her. Festivals to her memory began to be held about the year 431,<sup>7</sup> but were not generally observed until the sixth century. From this time until the sixteenth century they were general in all the Western churches, though differing in number and in rank in the several countries of Europe.<sup>8</sup> The Greek church observes only three great festivals of this description.

The following is a brief enumeration of the principal festivals in question:—

1. The festival of the Purification. Candlemas, Feb. 2, instituted in the sixth century.<sup>9</sup>

2. Of the Annunciation, popularly styled Lady Day, March 25, an early festival, styled by St. Bernard *radix omnium festorum*.<sup>10</sup> It dates back only to the seventh century.

3. Of the Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth, instituted by Urban VI., 1389.<sup>11</sup>

4. Of the Assumption of Mary into heaven, August 15, early instituted.<sup>12</sup> Mary was the tutelary divinity of France; and for this reason this day was observed with peculiar care. It was also the birthday of Napoleon, and accordingly was observed under his dynasty as the great festival of the nation.

5. Of the Nativity of Mary, September 8, instituted in the Eastern church in the seventh century; in the Western, in the eleventh or twelfth.<sup>13</sup>

6. Of the naming of Mary, A. D. 1513.

7. Of Conception. This feast, according to Bellarmin, was not necessarily dependant upon the question so fiercely discussed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries respecting the immaculate conception.<sup>14</sup>

5. *Festivals in memory of the Apostles, Saints, and Martyrs.*—These festive occasions in memory of the martyrs are often styled their *birth days*, μαρτύρων γενέθλια, *natilitia*. They never relate, however, to their *natural birth*, but to their *death*, at which they are born to a new and nobler life above. *Nemo, ante obitum,*

*beatus*, was an established maxim of the church. "When you hear of the birthday of a saint," says Peter Chrysologus, "think not that it relates to his carnal birth on earth, but to the day when he was born from earth to heaven, from toil to rest, from labour to repose, from trials to joys unfading and eternal; from earthly vanities to a crown of glory."<sup>15</sup>

The earliest festival of this kind was that of Polycarp. Another, which was observed with great solemnity, was the feast of the Maccabees, founded on the heroic death of the mother and her seven sons.<sup>16</sup> These festivals were preceded by vigils, and celebrated around the graves of the martyrs, where their lives were read, and eulogies pronounced, the sacrament administered, and public entertainments given gratuitously by the rich. But these entertainments became, in time, the occasion of shameful excesses, and were suppressed. It is worthy of note that the fathers indignantly repel the charge of paying religious honours to the martyrs, and assert that they only celebrate these festivals to provoke the living to emulate the deeds of the sainted dead, and to follow after those who, through faith and patience, inherited the promises.<sup>17</sup>

*Of the Apostles' Days.*—The reasons for observing these were the same as for observing the martyr feasts; nor is there any instance of the appointment of such a day for any apostle or evangelist who was known not to have suffered martyrdom. The Apostolical Constitutions<sup>18</sup> make mention of the apostles' feast, and direct that slaves shall be exempt from labour on that day, which intimates that it was regarded as one of the great feasts. But none of the apostles is specified, neither is the time of observing it mentioned. The idea of a general feast of this character was often entertained, though the festival was but inconstantly observed. The oriental church celebrated it immediately after Whitsunday, and in connection with it; but the churches generally were not agreed either in regard to the day, or the persons who should be honoured by it. At one time, Peter's and Paul's day is mentioned;<sup>19</sup> at another, that of Philip and James;<sup>20</sup> then the twelve collectively.<sup>21</sup> But separate festivals were, in time, prescribed for all, together with the evangelists Mark and Luke.

Festivals were, in process of time, established also in great numbers for the *saints* of distinction, though they died not as martyrs. The Eastern church was the first to appoint such festivals. In the Western church they were regarded most from the time of Charlemagne to Gregory VIII.<sup>22</sup>

The right of canonizing saints originally belonged to the bishops,

but the privilege was restricted by councils.<sup>23</sup> The first instance of canonization by the pope occurred A. D. 995. The privilege continued to be exercised occasionally until the twelfth century, when it began to be boldly asserted and defended.

The feasts of All Saints, November 1, and of All Souls, November 2, were instituted, the former in the seventh, and the latter in the tenth century.

We shall dismiss this subject with a brief notice of some of those days.

*St. Matthias's Day, February 24*, began to be observed perhaps in the eighth century.

*St. Mark's Day, April 25*, eighth century.

*St. Philip and St. James's Day, May 1*, date of the institution unknown.

*St. John's Day, June 24*. This commemorates the *birth* of the Baptist, as Christmas does that of Christ. Both are veiled in equal uncertainty, but the former is known to have preceded the latter by six months, and is accordingly held June 24. Thus the sun of the Old Testament is made to set at the summer solstice, and that of the New Testament to rise in the winter solstice.<sup>24</sup> In the year 506, it was received among the great feasts, like Easter, Christmas, and other festivals; and was celebrated with equal solemnity, and in much the same manner.<sup>25</sup>

*St. Peter and St. Paul's Day, June 29*, date unknown.

*St. James the Apostle, July 25*, began to be generally observed in the eleventh century.

*St. Bartholomew, August 24, St. Matthew the Apostle, September 21*, both of uncertain date.

*St. Michael and All Angels, September 29*, not generally observed before the eighth century.

*St. Luke the Evangelist, October 18, St. Simon and St. Jude, October 28*. The origin of both is unknown.

*All Saints' Day, November 1; All Souls' Day, November 2*. The former was instituted in the seventh, the latter in the tenth century.

*St. Andrew's Day, November 30*. The origin of this solemnity is ascribed to the fourth century.

*St. Thomas the Apostle, December 21*.

A further sketch of the endless festivals of the Catholics would be inconsistent with the design of this work. Suffice it to say, that they fill up the entire year in the Roman calendar, so that there

is not a day which is not dedicated to the memory of one or more of their saints.

*Of the Fasts.—Practice of the Early Christians.*—The doctrine and practice of our Lord and his apostles respecting fasting may be thus described:—Our Saviour neglected the observance of those stated Jewish fasts which had been superadded to the Mosaic law, and introduced especially after the captivity, to which the Pharisees paid scrupulous attention, Matt. xi. 18, 19; and he represented such observances as inconsistent with the genius of his religion. Matt. ix. 14–18, and parallel passages, Mark ii. 15–22, Luke v. 33–39. The practice of voluntary and occasional fasting he neither prohibited nor enjoined; he spoke of it, however, as being not unsuitable on certain occasions, nor without its use in certain cases, Matt. ix. 15; xvii. 21; he fasted himself on a great and solemn occasion, Matt. iv. 2; and he warned his disciples against all ostentatious and hypocritical observances of this kind, Matt. vi. 16–18. The doctrine of the apostles on this subject was to the same purport, neither commanding the practice of fasting, nor denouncing it as unlawful, unless either the observance or omission should involve a breach of some moral and Christian duty, Róm. xiv. 14–22; Col. ii. 16–23; 1 Tim. iv. 3–5. In practice, the apostles joined fasting with prayer, on solemn occasions. Acts xiii. 2, 3; xiv. 23.

The observance of fasts was introduced into the church slowly and by degrees. We learn from Justin Martyr that fasting was joined with prayer, at Ephesus, in the administration of baptism; which is worthy of being remarked as an early addition to the original institution. In the second century, in the time of Victor and Irenæus, it had become usual to fast before Easter; and Clement of Alexandria speaks of weekly fasts. Tertullian, a Montanist, in his treatise, *De Jejunió*, complains heavily of the little attention paid by the Catholic church to the practice of fasting; and hereby gives us to understand that, in his days, a large portion of orthodox Christians exercised that liberty of judgment which had been sanctioned by the apostles. Origen, in his voluminous writings, adverts to the subject only once, namely, in his tenth homily on Leviticus. And here he speaks in accordance with the apostolical doctrine. It appears, however, from his observations, that at Alexandria, Wednesdays and Fridays were then observed as fast-days, on the ground that our Lord was betrayed on a Wednesday, and crucified on a Friday. The custom of the church at the end of the fourth century may be collected from the following passage



of Epiphanius :—"In the whole Christian church the following fast-days, throughout the year, are regularly observed. On Wednesdays and Fridays we fast until the ninth hour (*i. e.* three o'clock in the afternoon;) except during the interval of fifty days between Easter and Whitsuntide, in which it is usual neither to kneel nor fast at all. Besides this, there is no fasting on the Epiphany or Nativity, if those days should fall on a Wednesday or Friday. But those persons who especially devote themselves to religious exercises (the monks,) fast also at other times when they please, except on Sundays and during the fifty days between Easter and Whitsuntide. It is also the practice of the church to observe the forty days before the sacred week. But on Sundays there is no fasting, even during the last-mentioned period."<sup>26</sup>

To this summary we subjoin the remarks of Socrates respecting the observance of the fasts before Easter, in the fifth century, from which it appears that, at this late period, both the time and manner of keeping this fast was unsettled, and that each church was left very much to their voluntary action in the observance of it.

"The fasts before Easter are differently observed. Those at Rome fast three successive weeks before Easter, excepting Saturdays and Sundays. The Illyrians, Athenians, and Alexandrians observe a fast of *six weeks*, which they term the forty days' fast, (Lent.) Others commencing their fast from the seventh week before Easter, and fasting fifteen days only, and that at intervals, call that time 'the forty days' fast.' It is indeed surprising that thus differing in the number of days, they should both give it one common appellation, but some assigning one reason for it, and others another, according to their several fancies. There is also a disagreement about abstinence from food as well as the number of days. Some wholly abstain from things that have life; others feed upon fish only of all living creatures; many, together with fish, eat fowl also, saying that according to Moses, these were likewise made out of the waters; some abstain from eggs, and all kinds of fruits; others feed on dry bread only; others eat not even this; while others, having fasted until the ninth hour, afterward feed on any sort of food without distinction."<sup>27</sup>

*Practice of Later Times.*—Fasting, after a time, ceased to be a voluntary exercise. By the second canon of the Council of Orleans, A. D. 541, it was decreed that any one who should neglect to observe the stated times of abstinence should be treated as an offender against the laws of the church. The eighth Council of To-

ledo, in the seventh century,<sup>28</sup> condemns any who should eat flesh during the fast before Easter, and says that such offenders deserve to be forbidden the use of it throughout the year. In the eighth century, fasting began to be regarded as a meritorious work; and the breach of the observance, at the stated seasons, subjected the offender to excommunication. In later times, some persons who ate flesh during the appointed seasons of abstinence were punished with the loss of their teeth.<sup>29</sup>

Afterward, however, these severities were, to a certain extent, relaxed. Instead of the former limitation of diet on fast-days to bread, salt, and water, permission was given for the use of all kinds of food, except flesh, eggs, cheese, and wine. Then eggs, cheese, and wine were allowed, flesh only being prohibited; an indulgence which was censured by the Greek church, and led to a quarrel between it and the Western. In the thirteenth century, a cold collation in the evening of fast-days was permitted.

To detail at length the futile superstitions and frightful austerities of ancient ascetics would itself require a volume. The narrative seems to transcend our belief, as the sufferings inflicted exceed apparently human nature's powers of endurance; and yet the facts are as fully attested as any portion of ancient history can be. These mortifications are only an exemplification of a vain effort to raise high the inward graces of the Christian life by pressing the natural powers of abstinence up to the highest stretch of which they are capable. "With the ancient church, the degree of abstinence was the measure of sanctity. If a man was holy who never tasted food until sunset, he who ate only once in two days was holier; and holier still the eminent man who absolutely fasted five days in every week. If he who ate flesh sparingly might pretend to a little sanctity, he who never touched animal food might pretend to more; and as to the prodigy of Christian perfection who denied himself whatever had been prepared by fire, *the totaller* of that day, the pity was that such a hero of the stomach should have been detained on earth at all. If to drink water only was a merit, great was the merit of drinking fetid water! Ask the writers of antiquity to show you in their opinion 'the highest style of man'—there he stands, and he has supped on raw herbs and ditch-water!"

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH.

THE history of the ancient religious sects of the East opens an interesting and important field of inquiry in investigating the rites and customs and discipline of the primitive church. These religious sects, severally, separated themselves at a very early period from the established church; and, in the deep seclusion and sleepless jealousy of Eastern bigotry, they have preserved their ancient religious rites unchanged through the lapse of ages. These their religious rites, therefore, carry us back to a high antiquity, and, with some circumstantial variations, disclose to us the usages and customs of the ancient church.

It would be interesting and instructive, for this reason, to compare the antiquities of some of the most ancient of these religious sects, such as the Armenians, the Nestorians, the Jacobites, the Copts, etc. The author has taken measures to obtain from our missionaries a brief statement of the religious rites of several of these sects, and has the pleasure of laying before the reader one such abstract respecting the Armenian church, from the Rev. H. G. O. Dwight, missionary at Constantinople. This communication from him cannot fail to be alike interesting both to the antiquarian and the Christian.

#### § 1. ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH.

AMONG the sovereigns of the East, at the time of Christ, was one by the name of Abgar, or Abgarus, the seat of whose government was at Edessa in Mesopotamia. He is called by Tacitus (An. l. 12, c. 12) King of the Arabs, though in the Armenian Chronicles he is placed among the Armenian kings, of the dynasty of the Arsacidæ. It is said that this king was converted to Christianity merely by hearing of the wonderful works of Christ, and that he sent a special messenger with a letter to invite Christ to

come to his court, where he promised him rest and protection from his enemies. To this request Christ replied that it was impossible for him to come in person, but that after his ascension, he would send one of his disciples, in his place. Eusebius and others relate that our Saviour took a handkerchief, and, pressing it upon his face, an exact likeness of himself was miraculously impressed upon it, which he sent to Abgar as a mark of favour.

Moses Chorenensis, the Armenian historian, states that our Saviour sent to King Abgar his own likeness, but makes no allusion to the manner in which it was procured.

This last writer also declares, that after the death of Christ, the apostle Thomas, in obedience to the command of the Saviour, and agreeably to his promise, sent Thaddeus, one of the seventy, to Edessa, who healed the king of an incurable disease under which he had been suffering for seven years, and afterward baptized him in the name of Christ. Many other miracles are said to have been performed by Thaddeus, and "the whole city," says Moses, "was baptized."

This is the Armenian account of the beginning of their church, and Eusebius bears his testimony to the same facts in every important particular.

The immediate successors of Abgar, however, apostatized from the Christian faith, and by their persecutions Christianity was almost exterminated from the country. It would appear, however, that individual Christians, and perhaps small bodies of them, were found in the Armenian territories up to the time of Dertad (Diridates) II., A. D. 259, during whose reign Christianity was revived, through the instrumentality of Gregory, and it has ever since been the religion of the Armenian people.

Gregory, called also Loosavorich, the *Enlightener*, was an Armenian of royal descent, who having been brought up in Cæsarea, was there educated in the Christian religion.

Having become connected with the king's suite, and refusing to unite in his idolatrous worship, he was grievously tortured, and kept, in close confinement in a cave for many years. Being at length delivered, he was instrumental in the conversion of the king, and many of the nobles. He afterward repaired to Cæsarea, where he was ordained bishop, by Leonties, bishop of Cæsarea, and returning to Armenia Proper, he baptized the king and multitudes of the people. In short, the nation now became Christian, though some of its chiefs soon afterward apostatized; and through their means the king of Persia was enabled, for a while, to carry

on a persecution against the religion of the cross. At subsequent periods in the Armenian annals, we read of the most violent and dreadful persecutions of the Armenian Christians, by the pagan and Mohammedan kings of Persia, as political changes placed the former under the power of the latter.

In the year 406, the Armenian alphabet was invented, and in 411, the Bible was translated into the Armenian language from the Septuagint.

In the year 491, a synod of Armenian bishops rejected the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon, by which act they cut themselves off from the charity and communion of the other branches of the Christian church, and they are to this day denominated schismatics and heretics by both the Greeks and the Papists.

As to the progress of the Armenian church in after ages, little indeed can be said, unless we follow the examples of their own historians, and quote as evidences of her prosperity the number of churches and convents erected, the great increase of religious feast and fast days, and of ceremonies in general, and the astonishing miracles performed by worldly and graceless monks. The people were left in almost total ignorance, while the ecclesiastics were continually embroiled in disputes with the Greeks on points of little importance, or waging intestine wars of ambition with each other, each striving for the highest place. As might be expected, every species of irreligion was rife under such influences.

The only redeeming trait was the unflinching resoluteness with which property, liberty, and life were frequently sacrificed to the Magian and Mohammedan persecutors of the Armenian church.

## § 2. CHURCH OFFICERS AND GOVERNMENT.

THE Armenians are at present scattered among different nations, and subject to different political governments, by which their ecclesiastical polity is somewhat modified. Originally the church was placed under one head, styled *catholicos*, who usually held his seat at the imperial residence. Subsequently, several different catholicoses were created by parties rising up in different parts of the country, and taking advantage of the disturbed state of public affairs. At present there are three catholicoses, one at Echmiadzin, (which is the greatest,) one at Aghtamar, in the Lake Van, and one at Sis, in the ancient province of Cilicia.

The catholicos is the spiritual head of the church, or of that particular portion of it over which his jurisdiction extends. He



only can ordain bishops and consecrate the sacred oil which is used in various ceremonies of the church.

The Armenians at Constantinople, with all those in Turkey in Europe, and in Asia Minor, and Armenia Proper, were formerly under the jurisdiction of the catholicos of Echmiadzin; but since that see has fallen within the possessions of Russia, the Armenians in those parts of Turkey mentioned, have been ostensibly without any spiritual head; although there is still a secret connection between them and Echmiadzin, and several *vartabeds* have lately gone to the latter place to be ordained bishops.

There are two patriarchs, it is true, one at Constantinople and the other at Jerusalem; but both these offices were established by Mohammedan authorities for their own convenience; and as neither of them has the power of ordaining bishops, they may be considered as only themselves holding the rank of bishops, ecclesiastically, though clothed with high political authority by the Turks.

The Armenian patriarch at Constantinople has the power of imprisoning and scourging, at pleasure, members of his own flock, and until recently he could easily procure their banishment from the Turkish authorities, whenever he pleased. The late charter given by the sultan to his subjects will, however, if carried into effect, prevent him from doing this except on a regular trial before the Turkish courts.

It will be understood from what has been said that the form of government of the Armenian church is episcopal. There are *nine* different grades of the Armenian clergy, all of which are set apart to their respective offices by the laying on of hands. Four of these are below the order of deacon, and are called *porters*, *readers*, *exorcists*, and *candle-lighters*. After these come the subdeacons, the deacons, then the priests, then the bishops, and last of all the catholicos. All below the bishop are ordained by the bishop, and he by the catholicos only. The catholicos is ordained by a council of bishops.

There is a class of ecclesiastics, called *vartabeds*, which may be considered as collateral with the order of priests. The difference between them is simply this: the priests are married, and in fact no man can be ordained priest, unless, at the time of ordination, he has a wife. The *vartabeds* never marry, and have taken upon them the vow of perpetual celibacy. The priests always remain priests, and can never rise to the rank of bishop. The *vartabeds* may become bishops, and, in fact, all the bishops are taken from that order, and are bound to celibacy. The *vartabeds* are the preachers,

(strictly speaking,) but the priests never preach. The vartabeds live not among the people, but in convents, where there are convents, or if not, they live by themselves within the church enclosures. The priests live in the midst of their flocks, and go in and out among them freely. In case the wife of a priest dies, he is not permitted to marry again, and he may then if he chooses become a vartabed.

There are also several subdivisions of grade among the vartabeds, each of which has its particular ordination service. *The supreme order of vartabed*, is now practically unknown; though according to the rules of the church it should exist. The individual who fills this office may be either a vartabed or a bishop. If the former, he may be ordained to it by a bishop; but if the latter, he must be set apart to this high dignity by the catholicos himself. He is considered by way of eminence as an apostolical preacher; and his labours are to be *among the heathen* alone. The spirit of missions is dead in the Armenian church; and therefore they have no further employment for such a class of men.

### § 3. DOCTRINES.

THE chief point of separation between the Armenians on the one side, and the Greeks and Papists on the other, is, that while the latter believe in two natures and one person of Christ, the former believe that the humanity and divinity of Christ were so united as to form but *one nature*; and hence they are called *monophysites*.

Another point on which they are charged with heresy by the Papists is, that they adhere to the notion that the Spirit proceeds from the Father only; and in this the Greeks join them, though the Papists say that he proceeds from the Father and the Son. In other respects, the Greeks and Armenians have very nearly the same religious opinions; though they differ somewhat in their forms and modes of worship. For instance, the Greeks make the sign of the cross with three fingers, in token of their belief in the doctrine of the Trinity—while the Armenians use two fingers, and the Jacobites one.

The Armenians hold to seven sacraments like the Latins, although baptism, confirmation, and extreme unction are all performed at the same time—and the forms of prayer for confirmation and extreme unction are perfectly intermingled; which leads one to suppose that, in fact, the latter sacrament does not exist among them, except in name; and that this they have borrowed from the Papists.

Infants are baptized both by triple immersion and pouring water three times upon the head,—the former being done, as their books assert, in reference to Christ's having been three days in the grave,—and probably suggested by the phrase, *buried with him in baptism*.

The latter ceremony they derive from the tradition that when Christ was baptized, he stood in the midst of Jordan, and John poured water from his hand three times upon his head. In all their pictures of this scene, such is the representation of the mode of our Saviour's baptism. Converted Jews, or Mohammedans, though adults, are baptized in the same manner.

The Armenians acknowledge sprinkling as a lawful mode of baptism, for they receive from other churches those that have merely been sprinkled, without rebaptizing them.

They believe firmly in transubstantiation, and worship the consecrated elements as God.

Unleavened bread is used in the sacrament, and the broken pieces of bread are dipped in undiluted wine, and thus given to the people.

The latter, however, do not handle it, but receive it into their mouths from the hands of the priest. They suppose it has in itself a sanctifying and saving power. The Greeks in this sacrament use leavened bread, and wine mixed with water.

The Armenians discard the popish doctrine of purgatory, but yet most inconsistently they pray for the dead.

They hold the confession of sins to the priests, who impose penances and grant absolution, though without money, and they give no indulgences.

They pray through the mediation of the Virgin Mary and other saints. The belief that Mary was always a virgin is a point of very high importance with them; and they consider the thought of her having given birth to children after the birth of Christ, as in the highest degree derogatory to her character, and impious.

They regard baptism and regeneration as the same thing, and have no conception of any spiritual change; and they know little of any other terms of salvation than penance, the Lord's supper, fasting, and good works in general.

The Armenians are strictly Trinitarians in their views, holding firmly to the supreme divinity of Christ, and the doctrine of atonement for sin; though their views on the latter subject, as well as in regard to faith and repentance, are somewhat obscure. They say that Christ died to atone for original sin, and that actual sin

is to be washed away by penances,—which in their view is repentance. Penances are prescribed by the priests, and sometimes consist in an offering of money to the church, a pilgrimage, or more commonly in repeating certain prayers, or reading the whole book of Psalms a specified number of times. Faith in Christ seems to mean but little more than believing in the mystery of transubstantiation.

#### § 4. FORMS OF WORSHIP, FESTIVALS, ETC.

THE Armenian churches are opened regularly twice every day, morning and evening, for prayers, and mass is performed every day in all the city churches, though in the country less frequently, according to the size of the church and the number of priests. It occupies sometimes six hours and more for its completion. It consists in chanting and reading prayers and portions of the Scriptures, and responses by the people. The officiating priest or bishop is richly dressed, as are the deacons and singers. Small bells are rung and incense is burned, and various other ceremonies are performed which contribute to please and awe the people. At the ordinary morning and evening prayers the people kneel and cross themselves in rapid succession a number of times while the priests are chanting the prayers. These prostrations are made frequently before a picture of the Virgin or other saint. In the more recently constructed Armenian churches, however, pictures are almost wholly excluded. In some parts of the country, also, instead of repeating the ceremony of prostrating themselves as above described, they simply kneel, and thus remain quietly until the prayer is finished. This seems to have been the ancient custom of the Armenian church, and a change has taken place in the churches around the Levant, probably through the influence of the Greeks.

The Scriptures and prayers are read in the ancient Armenian tongue, which is understood but by very few among the people—and if understood, would hardly be intelligible, the tones of voice are so drawling and unnatural. Preaching is rare among the Armenians, and is only performed by the bishops and vartabeds, and generally only on particular feast-days. The priests are never expected to preach, their business being to read prayers and say mass. Though the apocryphal books are bound up with the others in the Armenian Bible, yet they are considered as uncanonical, and are never read in the churches.

There are at least fourteen great feast-days in the course of the

year on which all ordinary labour is suspended, and the day is observed more strictly than the Sabbath. Besides these there are numerous other feasts and fasts, more numerous even than the days of the year; so that, in some instances, several are appointed to the same day. Besides the occasional fasts, such as a fast of forty days before Easter, and another of six days before Christmas, etc., they have two weekly fasts, the one on Wednesday and the other on Friday. The Armenians have 165 days in the year appointed for fasting. They do not properly fast, however, since they are permitted to eat plentifully of all kinds of vegetable food, except the vegetable oils—and a fast with them is merely abstaining from animal food.

Among the Armenians, girls are often married at the age of twelve or thirteen, the other sex rarely until they are from twenty-five to thirty. The marriage contract is made by the parents or guardians, and the parties are not expected to see one another until after they are husband and wife. The ceremonies of marriage occupy three days—during which time there are constant festivities, either at the house of the bridegroom or bride, or both. The bride is at last carried to the house of the bridegroom in procession of carriages, or carts drawn by oxen, the ceremony of marriage being performed sometimes at the house and sometimes at church. The expenses of the dowry and the marriage festivities come upon the bridegroom, and they are usually quite large. Marriage is considered as one of the sacraments, and there is properly no divorce after the tie is once made. The laws of the Armenians are more strict than those of Moses in regard to the degrees of consanguinity within which persons may marry.

When a person dies, several of the female friends of the family are usually present, who make a loud outcry, so as to be heard at some distance from the house. The funeral takes place on the same day. The body is dressed as when alive, and placed in an open bier, which is ornamented with flowers, natural or artificial, and thus carried to the graveyard. An irregular procession of the friends is formed, headed by priests and singers, with lighted candles, if the wind will permit, and a plaintive funeral-dirge is chanted as they pass along the streets. Candles are always carried, even although the funeral should be at midday, though sometimes they cannot be lighted. Female friends never accompany the procession to the grave. At the grave, prayers are read, and the body, without coffin, is committed to the earth. The ordinary garments are first removed, and the body closely wound up



by a long piece of cloth, and thus placed in the grave and covered with earth. If he be an ecclesiastic, a stone is placed on each side of the head, and another over the top, to prevent the earth from coming in immediate contact with the head, which has been anointed with holy oil. After the grave of an ecclesiastic has been filled up, another hillock of the same dimensions and appearance is raised by its side in order to prevent the body from being stolen. The temptation to this crime in the case of an ecclesiastic is, that as it is a sacred body, having been anointed, it may be in demand for relics. Mourning garments are never worn by the males among the Armenians; but the females at Constantinople dress in black. In the case of an ecclesiastic, prayers are read at the house every evening after the burial until Saturday. If the death takes place on Saturday, they are read only on that evening. If it be a layman, they are read only once on the evening of the burial, and once on the following Saturday evening. The friends also occasionally call for the priest to say prayers over the grave; but this in Constantinople is without rule, and they do it whenever they please. In some parts of Armenia proper they have the following customs on the subject:—After the burial, the officiating priest reads prayers over the grave once a day for eight days, if the deceased is an ecclesiastic, and for three days if a layman, and also on the 8th, 15th, and 40th days after the decease, and at the end of one year.

The present state of the Armenian church is one of deep interest. Enlightened views in regard to the truths of the Scriptures are extensively spread among them, particularly in Constantinople and in some of the adjacent cities, and it is evident that at least a portion of the church is on the eve of a reform. They are an enterprising and talented people, and evidently possess the elements of a solid and noble character. With a truly regenerated nature, they promise to be most important instruments in the hands of God in spreading the light of true Christianity over the East.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### OF THE NESTORIAN CHURCH.

#### § 1. OF THE HISTORY OF THE NESTORIAN CHURCH.

THE Nestorian Christians are the small, but venerable remnant of a once great and influential Christian church. They are the oldest of Christian sects; and, in their better days, were numerous through all the vast regions from Palestine to China; and they carried the gospel into China itself. Their history is a checkered one. Sometimes, as under the tolerant policy of the mighty Jhengis Khân, they were raised to high places in the camp and at the court; while at other times, as by the crushing arm of the bloody Timourlane, they were cut down and swept away, till scarce a vestige remained, save in the fastnesses of inaccessible mountains. But in both prosperity and adversity, during more than a thousand years of their history, are furnished the brightest examples of persevering toil and self-denial, and often of heroic martyrdom, cheerfully encountered in the profession and zealous promulgation of the gospel, that are to be found on the records of Christianity since the days of the apostles.

*Lineal Origin.*—Common tradition among them, claims the Jews as their ancestors. As evidence of this descent, they urge the resemblance which exists between the Hebrew and their own language. They also adduce their deep abhorrence of the use of images and pictures as another proof of their Jewish origin.

Some Europeans, who have resided in Persia, conjecture, that the mass of the Persian Mohammedans have a mixture of Jewish blood, drawing this inference from the general similarity of their customs to those of the Jews—the resemblance being very great—and from the known fact, that many Jews have, at different periods, been transferred from the land of their fathers into Persia. However the case may be, I know of no claim to relationship to the Jews, possessed by the Nestorians, which does not equally belong to the Persian Mohammedans among whom they dwell, with the single exception of the tradition I have mentioned. That either

class, or any portion of them, are the unmixed descendants of the "ten tribes," I see no good reason to suppose, even on the supposition of their having a Jewish, or a partially Jewish origin, which is also quite a doubtful matter. The fact that manners and customs are *oriental* rather than *national*, in all these Eastern countries, greatly embarrasses the subject of their ethnology.

*Conversion to Christianity.*—The Nestorians refer to Thomas, one of the twelve apostles, with whom Adai, (Thaddeus,) and Mari, of the number of the seventy, are said to have been associated. Oral tradition and the ancient writings of the Nestorians are united in support of this opinion. And as several of the Christian fathers inform us, that Thomas travelled eastward, even to India, preaching the gospel, as he advanced, through the countries intervening, we may regard the claims of the Nestorians, on this subject, as at least probable. This opinion is also confirmed by the fact, that their ritual, composed by ancient ecclesiastics, contains commemorations of Thomas, in the form of thanksgivings to God, for his zealous labours among their ancestors and other Eastern nations. And an additional confirmation is the fact that, at this day, the Nestorians are particularly fond of naming their churches in honour of that apostle, Mar Thoma, *i. e.* Saint Thomas.

*Origin as a Christian Sect.*—The origin of the Nestorians as a Christian sect is matter of authentic church history. Nestorius, from whom the sect derives its name, born and educated in Syria, was a presbyter at Antioch, and was made bishop of Constantinople, A. D. 428. The conspicuousness of his station—that city being the seat of empire—his boldness in attempting to correct some popular superstitions, and perhaps his rashness in theological speculation, drew upon him the envy and hostility of contemporary bishops, particularly of the ambitious Cyril, then bishop of Alexandria. Arraigned for alleged heresy, Nestorius was excommunicated, at Ephesus, by the third general council, in A. D. 431, only about three years after his elevation to the see of the renowned capital. First banished for a time to Arabia Petræa, and subsequently transported to one of the oases of Libya, he finally died in Upper Egypt. One charge on which the august council decreed his excommunication, by *ex parte* management, was, that he refused to apply to the Virgin Mary the epithet *Mother of God*, (Θεοτόκος.) This charge he evaded, though Protestant Christians would certainly have thought never the worse of him had he frankly pleaded guilty. Another principal charge, in his excom-

munication, was, that in his theological belief, he invested Christ with *two persons* as well as with two natures. This charge he perseveringly denied. His motives in attempting to check the prevalent superstition of paying idolatrous homage to a departed mortal, by applying to Mary the blasphemous epithet, *Mother of God*, were undoubtedly honest; and whatever novelties his speculating genius may have led him to broach, on the mysterious subject of the incarnation, his views, for aught that appears, were orthodox in the main. Indeed, it is worthy of inquiry, whether Nestorius may not have been far more evangelical than his opponents, and whether his comparative purity, in the general corruption of the church which prevailed at that period, may not have been the principal cause of the rigour with which he was treated.

## § 2. LOCATION AND CLIMATE.

THE Nestorians of Koordistân inhabit the wildest and most inaccessible parts of the Koordish mountains. Some of the districts occupied by them are so rough that no beast of burden can travel over them, and even men find it difficult to climb about from cliff to cliff.

The Nestorians of the mountains, like their Koordish neighbours, obtain their subsistence, to a great extent, from the pasturage of flocks. In their rugged country, the principal part of their arable soil consists of small terraced patches on the steep declivities of the mountains. And so rough and barren is much of their territory, that the people find it almost impossible to obtain a subsistence in their own country. Many of them are miserably poor. Some travel abroad and beg as a profession. Considerable numbers come down to the plain of Oróomiah, in summer, to find employment; and still more are driven down there, by hunger and cold, in the winter, to seek a subsistence on charity.

The climate of Oróomiah is *naturally* one of the finest in the world. It resembles, in its temperature, the climate of our Middle States. Unhappily, however, *artificial* causes are at work which render it decidedly unhealthy, particularly to foreigners. A country so charming, so bright under the effulgence of its clear heavens, and grateful with the thrifty growth of its abundant crops, presents to the *eye* so much of the aspect of an *Eden* as almost to forbid the idea of the approach of sickness and pain. But the foreigner, who resides there, is soon forced to feel that

its brilliant skies and balmy breezes, beautiful and grateful as they are, are still surcharged with the elements of disease and death. The causes of its unhealthiness are the constant irrigation,\* in summer, of the almost numberless fields and gardens on the plain, with the consequent great amount of evaporation—the rapid and almost boundless growth and decay of its annual vegetation—and a more prolific cause still, the numerous *pools of stagnant water* that remain much or all of the time in different places, particularly in the fosse which surrounds the city, and cannot fail to generate a vast amount of miasma.† The reforming hand of a good government, controlled by the redeeming spirit of Christianity, is all that is needed to drain and dry up those stagnant pools, and remove many other nuisances, and soon restore this climate, in a great measure, to its native salubrity.

### § 3. NUMBER OF THE NESTORIANS.

It is very difficult to arrive at even tolerable accuracy in estimating the *number* of the Nestorians. The methods of obtaining statistics on this subject, among orientals generally, are very indefinite and unsatisfactory. The population of a town, village, or district is usually estimated by the number of families, a given number of individuals being assumed as the average in each family. But in the primitive, patriarchal style of living which obtains in these countries, where three, four, or even five generations, as the case may be, dwell together in the same household, the number of persons in a family varying from five up to fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, thirty, and even more, it is impossible to fix accurately on an *average* number. *Ten* is the number often assumed for this purpose. In the Koordish mountains the population is often estimated by the number of *soldiers* that can be rallied on an emergency, every male adult being reckoned as a soldier. But this method is even more indefinite than the other; for in those wild, inaccessible regions there is the additional difficulty, that the number of

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\* Showers are very rare in Persia during the warm part of the year. The gardens and fields are therefore necessarily irrigated by means of small canals which conduct the water from the streams.

† Prof. Hitchcock, of Amherst College, has analyzed specimens of the water of the lake, and while the principal ingredient is muriate of soda, or common salt, he finds it capable of discharging large quantities of sulphuretted hydrogen; and suggests that this may also be a fruitful cause of the unhealthiness of the climate of that province.



either houses or soldiers is very imperfectly known. The probable number of the Nestorian Christians, as nearly as I can ascertain it, with such difficulties encumbering the subject, is about one hundred and forty thousand.

#### § 4. LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE.

*Ancient Language.*—To the Christian scholar the language and literature of the Nestorian Christians are objects of much interest. Their ancient language is the Syriac—by some supposed to have been the common language in Palestine in the days of Christ, and the same in which the Saviour himself conversed and preached, and probably not differing much from it.\* This language is still the literary language of the Nestorians. Their books are nearly all written in it. They conduct their epistolary correspondence in it; and though a dead language, the best educated of their clergy become able to converse in it with fluency. Their written character differs considerably from that of the Western, or Jacobite Syrians, which is the character best known to European scholars. The former was never, to my knowledge, in type until A. D. 1829, when an edition of the Gospels was printed in it by the British and Foreign Bible Society. It much resembles the Estrangelo,† but has a more round and easy form. The Nestorians have some old books written in the Estrangelo, and they still use that ancient character for capital letters. The common Nestorian character is a very clear and beautiful one, so agreeable to the eye that members of our mission, when incapacitated by ophthalmia to read English without pain, are able to read the Syriac in this character with little inconvenience.

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\* See an able and interesting article in relation to this language in the *Biblical Repository* for April, 1831, vol. i. p. 358.

† “Estrangelo is the most ancient among the kinds of writing which are found in Syriac books. To this name, indeed, Asseman gives the signification of *round*, deriving it from the Greek *στρογγύλος*. But since this form of the letter is by no means *round*, (a point correctly observed by J. D. Michaelis and Adlerus,) we conclude, along with these men, that the name is of Arabic origin. The Syrians first employed it *Carschunice*, i. e. in writing Syriac letters; then adopted it, being derived from *سُطْر* *scriptura*, and *اِنْجِيل* *evangelium*; so that it may signify *scriptura evangelii*. This is the large hand which they employed in writing copies of the gospel, opposed to the smaller and more rapidly written letters which Adlerus informs us were used for common purposes at that time.”—*Hoffman's Syr. Gram.* p. 67. See also notes following on the same page.

## § 5. VERSIONS OF THE SCRIPTURES USED BY THE NESTORIANS.

OF the venerable ancient Syriac, once so highly and extensively cultivated, and so rich in its literary treasures, we now find, as of the unfortunate people who use it, little more than its ashes. The number of works at present extant among the Nestorians is very limited, and copies of these are extremely rare. The library of the patriarch, which had often been represented to us as absolutely prodigious, and might appear so to these simple-hearted people, who were acquainted with no method of making books, except the slow motion of the pen, was found by Dr. Grant to consist of not more than sixty volumes, and a part of these are duplicates. And no other collection, to be compared with this, exists among the Nestorians. Three, five, or ten books have been regarded as a liberal supply for a large village or district even.

The few books which the Nestorians possess, however, are objects of deep interest. Among them are found the whole of the Holy Scriptures, with the following exceptions, viz. the epistle of Jude, the second and third epistles of John, the second of Peter, and the Revelation; also the account of the woman taken in adultery in John viii., and the much discussed passage in 1 John v. 7, none of which are found in any of their MS. copies, or seem to have been known to them until introduced by us in the printed editions of the British and Foreign Bible Society; *i. e.* the *Peschito*\* is the only version of the New Testament with which they seem ever to have been acquainted. They make no objection to these portions of the Scriptures as introduced by us, but readily recognise and acknowledge them as canonical.

The *Peschito*, the version of the New Testament used by the Nestorians, is an excellent one, being a translation probably from the Greek. Their ecclesiastics regard it as all made directly from the Greek, with the exception of the Gospel of Matthew, which they say was translated from the supposed early Hebrew version. The version of the Old Testament most used by them much resembles the Septuagint.

*Ancient Manuscripts.*—Among the books of the Nestorians are some very ancient manuscripts. There are copies of the New Testament, for instance, written, some on parchment and some on paper, which date back about six hundred years. Some of these

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\* *Peschito* is a Syriac word, meaning pure, simple, or literal. This version of the New Testament is supposed to have been early made from the Greek.

are written in the Estrangelo, and some in the common Nestorian character. The very ancient copies of the Scriptures are regarded by the Nestorians with much veneration, and are used with great care. They are kept wrapped in successive envelopes, and when taken into the hands are reverently kissed, as very hallowed treasures. In the village of Kówsee is a copy of the New Testament which purports to be fifteen hundred years old. A few of the first parchment leaves are gone and their place is supplied by paper, on which that early date is recorded, with how much authority is uncertain. The rubrics, in most ancient copies, moreover, betray a later origin than tradition or their dates would claim for them. I tried to borrow the revered copy here mentioned, to bring with me to America as an object of interest, but the Mohammedan master of the village interposed and forbade its being taken away, apprehending that some dire calamity would befall the inhabitants should so sacred a deposit be removed from among them. And such is the reputation of its antiquity and sanctity that Mohammedans, as well as Nestorians, are sometimes sworn upon that New Testament.

The beauty of Persian manuscripts has long been celebrated. Sir William Jones was so enraptured with them that he almost wished the art of printing had never been invented. And few can inspect them and compare them with printed copies, without participating in a measure of the same feeling, at least till they remember the inestimable blessings, so much richer and higher than all the elegance of caligraphy, which the press is beginning to pour upon Eastern nations. The Persians are able to write with a fineness and distinction that utterly defy imitation with type. I have seen the whole of the Korân written on two strips of fine Chinese paper, three inches wide and perhaps ten feet long—written, not “within and without,” but only on one side—which, when rolled up, made a roll a little larger than the finger; and still every letter was fully formed and perfectly legible.

#### § 6. ECCLESIASTICAL ORGANIZATION.

THERE are properly nine ecclesiastical orders among the Nestorian clergy, though two or three of them are at present little more than nominal. Beginning with the lowest, they are as follows, viz. 1. Hūpo Deeácōn, (sub-deacon,) who properly sweeps and lights the church, as well as takes some part in their devotions. 2. Káróya, (reader,) a kind of novice, who regularly joins

with the higher ecclesiastics in reciting the liturgy, and sometimes assists in the menial services of the church. 3. Shamásha, or Deeácōn, (deacon.) 4. Kásha, Kashsésha, or Kána, (priest.) 5. Arka Deeácōn, (archdeacon.) 6. Abóona, Episcopa, or Khalahá, (bishop.) 7. Metrán, or Metrōpoléeta, (metropolitan.) 8. Katoléeka, (catholokos,) not a distinct individual, but an order united with that of the patriarch, and one through which he must first pass in ordination. 9. The patriarch. All the orders of the clergy are ordained by the imposition of hands, from the deacon up to the metropolitan inclusive. The patriarch does not receive the imposition of hands at his consecration, as it cannot properly be performed by inferiors. And the subdeacon and reader are not thus set apart, unless they are expected to rise to higher orders. No ecclesiastic of a grade below bishops has power to ordain.

*Celibacy of the Episcopal Orders.*—The titles for bishop do not occur in the Syriac Scriptures, Kashésha, priest (elder, presbyter) being always used where the term bishop occurs in the English New Testament.

The canons of the Nestorian church require celibacy in all the episcopal orders of the clergy; *i. e.* in all from the bishops upward. They also require that from childhood they abstain from the use of all animal food, except fish, eggs, and the productions of the dairy, the latter requisition probably resulting from the former.

Unlike the requisition in the Greek and Armenian churches, all the Nestorian priests are allowed to marry a second time or more, in case of the decease of their wives.

## § 7. DOCTRINAL BELIEF.

IN general, it may be said that the religious belief of the Nestorians is far more simple and scriptural than that of other oriental Christians. They have the deepest abhorrence of all image worship, auricular confession, the doctrine of purgatory, and many other corrupt dogmas and practices of the Papal, Greek, and Armenian churches; while they cherish the highest reverence for the Holy Scriptures, and, in theory at least, exalt them far above all human traditions. Their doctrinal tenets, so far as I have learned them, are, in general quite clearly expressed and correct. On the momentous subject of the divinity of Christ, in relation to which the charge of heresy is so violently thrown upon them by the Papal and other oriental sects, their belief is orthodox and

scriptural. They are, I believe, orthodox on the subject of the Trinity.

They agree with the Greeks and Armenians in relation to the procession of the Holy Spirit, which they believe to be from the Father only, in opposition to the Papists, who hold that the operation proceeds both from the Father and the Son. The Nestorians hold to the perpetual virginity of Mary, though they attach far less importance to that point than other oriental Christians.

### § 8. RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES.

*Fasts.*—The following catalogue of the Nestorian fasts is given by Messrs. Smith and Dwight, with their usual accuracy, as it was furnished them by Mar Yohannan's father:—"It being Friday, we first questioned the priest respecting the fasts of his church. In conjunction with the others who were present, he informed us that they fast every Wednesday and Friday; twenty-five days before Christmas; fifteen days before the feast of St. Mary; three days before the feast of the cross, which occurs twelve days after Christmas; three days before the feast of St. John; three days before the feast of Khodéera Nébhee;\* fifty days before Easter, including Easter Sunday, when they eat meat; and fifty days before Pentecost, the observance of which is optional and not regarded by all. We asked, as he finished the list, if there are no more, and he jocosely replied, 'Why, are not these enough? What of the year remains for us to eat?' In none of their fasts do they eat any animal substance whatever; and in Lent, with the exception of Sundays and festivals, they eat but twice, once after midday, and once after evening prayers, and some eat only the latter meal."†

*Festivals.*—The following statement is from Mar Yohannan: "We keep fifty days as the fast of our Saviour, Jesus Christ; and on the fiftieth day we hold a festival. Further, there is another festival, which we call the festival of Christ's ascension to heaven. And again, the feast of Pentecost. Fifty days, commencing with Pentecost, is the fast of the apostles; and at the close of this fast we keep the feast of the apostles. Again, we keep a fast of fifteen days in the month of August, called the fast of St. Mary. Again, there are the seven weeks' fast of Elias, and the seven weeks' fast of Moses, which some men observe, and some do not observe.

\* An epithet applied to Jonah.

† Researches in Armenia, vol. ii. p. 208. Parts only of the paragraph on this subject are here quoted.



There is the feast of the transfiguration of Christ; the feast of the cross and the feast of the birth of Christ, and the feast of the baptism of Christ.

“These eight festivals of our Lord we observe, and we have many holy days and the Sabbath day, on which we do not labour. And on Wednesday and Friday we eat no flesh. The Sabbath day we reckon far—far above the others. The sacrament of the body and blood of Christ we celebrate with the leaven, the olive-oil, and pure meal, and with wine.”

*Sacrifices.*—The Nestorians resort to the church to offer sacrifices; *i. e.* they carry gifts in memory of the saint whose name it bears, and present them to the priest or the poor people of the village. They do the same on other saints' days, at other churches, bearing their respective names. Often, also, individuals make special offerings to avert evils, or thankfully to recognise mercies. In such cases they usually slay an animal, large or small, according to their ability, a portion of which they give to their pastor, and distribute the rest among their poor neighbours. The animal is not necessarily slain at a church, nor by a priest; nor is there so much that is religious in the practice as the term sacrifice might seem to imply, though in English we use that term in the same way, in a figurative and very general manner.

*Worship.*—Prayers are read daily in the churches of the Nestorians very early in the morning and about sunset at evening. Their services are not usually more than an hour in length, except on occasions when the Lord's supper is celebrated: then they are nearly three hours in length. The worship of the Sabbath does not differ materially from that of other days, except that an extra service for preaching the gospel is now extensively introduced under the influence of the missionaries. The liturgy is chanted in an obsolete language, without interest or edification on the part of the audience. Incense is burned in the churches of the Nestorians on the Sabbath and on feast-days.

Standing is their common attitude in worship, with occasional bowing and kneeling. They always direct their faces toward the East in worship, and construct their churches accordingly.

A cross always lies upon the New Testament on the altar, which all approach silently and kiss on entering the church. They also reverently kiss the hand of the officiating ecclesiastic, both on entering and leaving the church.

They have a great abhorrence of images and pictures, of which none are permitted in their churches.

## § 9. THE SACRAMENTS.

THE Nestorians reckon their sacraments at seven—the favourite number on this subject in all the Eastern churches. All the Nestorians are not agreed, however, in relation to what constitutes their sacraments. The following is a list which I have often heard mentioned:—

1. Ordination.
2. Baptism.
3. The Lord's supper.
4. Marriage.
5. Dedication of churches.
6. Burials.
7. Confirmation.

*Ordination.*—The Nestorians assert that their canons require that a bishop be more than forty years of age at the time of his consecration; but so far from adhering to this rule, boys, at the age of twelve or fifteen, are sometimes made bishops; and those still younger are often ordained as priests and deacons.

Most of the Nestorian ecclesiastics are ordained while mere boys. Their readers being few, they often need their services before they arrive at adult years; and as they attach very little sacredness to their religious forms, destitute as they are of spiritual views and feelings, they conceive no impropriety in committing those forms to the hands of children.

## § 10. BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION.

THE ceremony of baptism (Umâda) among the Nestorians, like most of their religious rites, is simple, compared with the forms of other oriental sects. They have a room in the church which is devoted to baptism, (*Künkee*—place of consecration; or *mâmodéeta*, or *Baet mâmodéeta*, place, or house of baptism.) The children are divested of their clothing and anointed on the head and the breast, in the form of the cross, with consecrated oil, (*kerne*, horn, *i. e.* horn of oil, from which the ancient kings and prophets were wont to be anointed—fully written, *Kerna d'míshkha*.) They are then set into a vessel of tepid water, which extends up to the neck, and held there by a deacon, while the priest takes up water with both hands three times and suffuses it over the head, repeating one

person of the Trinity each time. There is nothing exceptionable in their manner of performing this ordinance, except the oiling and crossing of the child, and the same heartlessness and want of solemnity in the officiators which marked their services at the celebration of the Lord's supper. The Nestorians observe no rule in relation to the age at which infants shall be presented for baptism. For the mutual convenience of the parents and the clergy, some festival occasions are usually embraced for the purpose; particularly the day which they regard as commemorating Christ's baptism by John in Jordan; also the day of his crucifixion, taking the idea perhaps from the apostle's figure of being "baptized into his death."

If the rite of confirmation exists in the Nestorian canons, nothing of it appears in their practice, so far as I have observed. Children, from the age of three years, or younger, are allowed and encouraged to partake of the elements, which all seem to regard as possessing a magic charm, that will somehow tend to prepare them for heaven, or rather entitle them to it, without reference to any influence exerted on their characters.

The ideas of the Nestorians respecting regeneration, as distinct from baptism, were very obscure when we commenced our missionary labours among them. Their ancient canons seem only to inculcate "baptismal regeneration." As, however, the people become enlightened, not merely the pious among them, but all make this important distinction.

### § 11. THE LORD'S SUPPER.

A BISHOP and priest, garbed in white cotton robes, chants the service in the *sanctum sanctorum*, which laymen are not allowed to enter. This service is usually performed by a priest and a deacon, provided a deacon happens to be present. The bread, at the close, is received from the hand of the superior officiator at the altar, and the wine from the inferior one, in a lower position, by the side of the altar. The wine at their communion is diluted with water, not on temperance grounds, but because water as well as blood flowed from the side of the Saviour. Both elements are extended to all the communicants. Though the whole service is far more simple than the disgusting routine of ceremonies which attend it in the other oriental churches, still it is but too evidently a heartless form.

*Körbána*, (gift or offering, *oblatio*,) is the term which they

apply to the elements. They do not worship them in the superstitious manner of the Papists, nor hold to real presence in the Papal sense of that term. They, however, appear to cherish a kind of homage for the bread and wine which is not very intelligent and scriptural, and great particularity is observed in the preparation of these elements. The bread must be baked in an apartment of the church; and among the most scrupulous, the wheat must be ground in a consecrated mill, [hand-mill,] separated from the rest in the field, and shelled by hand, instead of being trodden out by cattle. Alas, in how many things do these fallen Christians strain at the gnat and swallow the camel! As nearly as I have been able to ascertain, in the general vagueness of their views on spiritual subjects, the consubstantiation of the Lutherans would very well define the Nestorian belief in relation to this ordinance, if, indeed, that term be itself well defined or understood by those who adopt it.

This sacrament is celebrated by the Nestorians, not periodically, but on some of the more important festival occasions, to the number of eight or ten times in the course of a year. Entire uniformity in relation to its frequency is not observed. Bread for the communion-service is composed of flour, water, olive-oil, salt, and consecrated oil. It is also leavened. A small quantity of this composition, prepared by the higher ecclesiastics on the day of Christ's betrayal, is kept in the churches, from which a mite is taken and mixed with the bread, to hallow the mass on each sacramental occasion. This sacred "mite" is regarded as essential to the celebration of the ordinance.

The wine used at communion by the Nestorians is fermented. Indeed, they know of no other wine. The term which they use to designate the article (*khumra*) itself means fermented.

## § 12. MARRIAGE.

It is the practice of the Nestorians to have the marriage ceremony performed in their churches, and very early—commencing at least an hour before day—because the services are long, and the nuptial parties, and all the ecclesiastics who participate in the performance, are obliged to abstain from food on the wedding-day until after the ceremony. But in our instance, to gratify us, they had deferred the marriage till our arrival—10 o'clock, A. M.—and instead of assembling in the church, they had, for our better convenience, prepared to perform the service at home.

Priest Abraham was the principal officiator, but was assisted by two other priests and several deacons of the village, who joined with him in reading the prayers and select portions of Scripture, such as the account of Abraham's sending after Rebekah for his son, Jacob's serving for Rachel, and all the other venerable Scripture authorities that enter into their marriage-service; the whole of which would doubtless be more interesting, if not more instructive, were it not read in an unknown tongue. The bride retained her place veiled in the farther corner of the room about an hour, the bridegroom meanwhile standing near the officiating ecclesiastics. They then arrived at a point where hands were to be joined, this being made known by the ecclesiastics, who alone understood the service. Several women instantly caught hold of the still veiled bride and pulled her by main strength half across the room toward her intended husband; and several men at the same time seized the bridegroom, who was at first equally resolute in his modest resistance, but finally yielded and advanced toward the bride. A smart struggle ensued in his efforts to secure her hand; but he at length succeeded, and both, with great apparent submission, then took a standing attitude near the officiating clergy. The regular routine of reading occupied another hour or more, when, first the bishops, and after them the multitude—we of course among the rest—advanced and kissed the married pair.

After the services were closed, the married pair and the officiating ecclesiastics, who had till then—near 1 o'clock in the afternoon—eaten nothing that day, retired to take some refreshment. A table was also spread before us, and wine was passed among the multitude.

Betrothals are customary among the Nestorians, which are negotiated by the parents or other friends of the parties, but not without their own knowledge, and usually their mutual choice, and at least a sight acquaintance. These are made months, and often years before the marriage, at which time tokens or pledges, in the form of presents, are given by the would-be lover or his friends to the girl. A kind of semi-wedding is held at the homes of both parties at the time of betrothal, which is regarded as in a measure a sacred contract, though instances are not rare in which it is violated. Wives are purchased among the Nestorians as they were in the days of Jacob—the price varying from five to fifty, or one hundred dollars, according to the standing and charms of the person. It is not considered proper for the father of the bride, who receives the purchase-money, to appropriate it to his private pur-



poses, but expend it in furnishing her with "wedding garments." The wedding commences and continues two or three days at the homes of both parties. The bride is then sent for and conducted to the house of the bridegroom, who, amid music and dancing, gallantly welcomes her arrival, by throwing at her, as she approaches and alights, a few apples, or painted boiled eggs, from the roof of the dwelling, as loving tokens. The marriage-service is performed immediately after her arrival, and the festivities are continued several days, during which she is present among the guests, but is kept closely veiled.

That the burden of these long weddings may not be onerous on the parties, it is considered proper for the numerous guests, at the close, to make a liberal contribution, commonly enough to meet the expenses of the wedding, and sometimes much more. This equalizing system is perhaps a good one, as weddings thus bear heavily upon nobody at a given time, and the poor can as easily marry as their more wealthy neighbours. The common age at which the Nestorians marry, is from thirteen to fifteen of the female, and from fifteen to seventeen of the male. The bride, on her marriage, becomes a member of the bridegroom's father's family, subject like her husband and their children, when blest with them, to that father's patriarchal supervision and control.

### § 13. DEDICATION OF CHURCHES.

THIS ordinance consists of reading prayers, and crossing with consecrated oil four stones, one in each corner of the church, and a fifth, which is placed beneath the altar.

The Nestorian churches are plain, oblong structures; in Oromiah they are built usually of mud, but in the Koordish mountains of stone. They are divided into three apartments, viz. 1. The main body, or place of assembly, called "the temple." 2. A small room at one end, called "the altar," a kind of *sanctum sanctorum*, which none but ecclesiastics enter, and they only for the purpose of consecrating the elements for the celebration of the Lord's supper. 3. The baptistry, where the bread for communion is also made. The doors of the churches are very small, and they can hardly be said to be "lighted." A lamp is almost always employed at their worship, their churches being dark, or nearly so, even at midday. The people are summoned to worship by the sound of the sexton's mallet, struck upon a board.

The Nestorians consider it important to have some sacred relic

to deposit under the altar of a new church at the time of its erection. A bone, reported to be from the hand or arm of some ancient saint or martyr, preserved in all the freshness of life, is a favourite relic for this purpose; but in the lack of such they take a stone from some other church, which they place as a foundation-stone under the eastern end of the structure.

While the Nestorians thoroughly reject the doctrine of purgatorial fire, they still say prayers over the dead, three days after interment, which they call "the resurrection service," in memory of the resurrection of Christ on the third day.

Is not the almost miraculous preservation of the Nestorian church from being crushed by the heavy arm of Mohammedan oppression on the one hand, and decoyed and annihilated by the wiles of papal emissaries on the other, an animating pledge that the Lord of the church will continue to preserve this venerable remnant? That He will even revive and build it up for the glory of his name and the advancement of his kingdom? May he not have important purposes for this church to accomplish—a conspicuous part for it to act—in ushering in the millennial glory of Zion? What position could be more important and advantageous in its bearing on the conversion of the world for a Christian church to hold than that occupied by the Nestorians, situated as they are in the centre of Mohammedan dominion, and far toward the centre of benighted Asia! And is it too much to believe that this ancient church, once so renowned for its missionary efforts, and still possessing such native capabilities, as well as such felicity of location, for the renewal of like missionary labours, will again awake from the slumber of ages, and become clear as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners, to achieve victories for Zion! That it will again diffuse such floods of the light of truth as shall put for ever to shame the corrupt abominations of Mohammedanism, roll back the tide of Papal influence that is now threatening to overwhelm it, and send forth faithful missionaries of the cross in such numbers and with such holy zeal as shall bear the tidings of salvation to every corner of benighted Asia!

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### OF THE SACRED SEASONS OF THE PURITANS.

THE subject of the Fasts and Thanksgivings of New England is an interesting and neglected portion of the history of our Puritan forefathers, which the author has great pleasure in presenting to the reader, from the hand of a distinguished antiquary and historian, the Rev. Joseph B. Felt, of Boston; who, with his accustomed diligence and patient research has investigated this portion of our ecclesiastical history, and has very kindly embodied the result of his inquiries, in the following treatise, for this work.

#### § 1. FASTS AND THANKSGIVINGS OF NEW ENGLAND.

1. *Preliminary Remarks.*—Natural religion, as enlightened by original revelation however deteriorated, has long instructed man that he has sins enough for humility and mercies enough for gratitude. Hence it is, that ancient as well as modern nations, the history of whose worship has come down to our day, have had their seasons for giving expression to such affections of the soul. Hence, also, the wisdom of God in requiring this service from his once favoured people. In accordance with such example, the primitive Christians adopted days commemorative of events as full of interest to them as others had been to the Jews. These days were so far increased by the Catholic church and so far observed by the Episcopal church of England, as to meet, for the most part, with the disapprobation of Dissenters. Among the last denomination, who sought for greater simplicity in the forms of worship, was the celebrated John Robinson. His church in Leyden believed with him, that no other holy days should be observed, except Sabbaths and occasional fasts and thanksgivings. The portion of his flock, who resolved to forsake Europe and make their home in America, for the sake of purer society and the spread of the

gospel, had several seasons of fasting and prayer, as preparatory to so important an enterprise, within a few months before they sailed for South Hampton.<sup>1</sup> So disposed, they would sooner have thought of parting with all their worldly substance, than of omitting duties of public thanks and humiliation before their Maker. The same times, which they hallowed in their European pilgrimage, were engraved too deeply on the calendar of their sacred occasions, to be thus forgotten in their more perilous, needy, and changeful pilgrimage in this country. Hence, with their hopes and fears, their purposes and piety, they brought hither the observance of fasts and thanksgivings.

2. *Reasons for such days.*—As well known to those who have investigated the history of the planters at Plymouth, they had reasons for preferring these days to similar ones of the Episcopal order. They discountenanced the rubric, clerical robes and bands, marriage with a ring, baptism by the sign of a cross, and such particulars—enjoined by canonical rules of England—because adopted from the Papal forms, and fitted to turn back the liberty of Protestantism to the bondage of Romish hierarchy. So, for a like cause, they cast off the confinement of holy seasons, except the Sabbath, to particular days and months of each successive year. Their arguments for such an alteration had much force to their perception, when they saw how much the high church party, in their native land, leaned toward Papacy, and how bitter were their prejudices against those who were nonconformists, but who earnestly sought for greater purity in doctrine and more simplicity in ceremonies. As an additional weight in the scale of their judgment, they had not forgotten that adherence to Romish rules was one of the chief means, under the reign of Mary, which contributed to the relapse of Protestantism to Papacy. They were not so far unacquainted with human nature as to be ignorant that it possessed a principle which is wrought on by the association of appearances, and which, when having repudiated error, and still retaining its forms, is far more likely to fall back upon it, than if having altogether renounced both one and the other. Their reason for deviation from established custom, as now in view, was much stronger in their time than it was subsequently, when Congregationalism had risen from its infancy and numerous depressions to the stature and energy of manhood, so as to have little fear of an inroad upon its privileges. They well knew, that the fasts and thanksgivings of the conformists were designed, like their own, to improve the moral affections and keep man within the salu-

tary restraints of duty; and that the effects of these seasons, when properly observed by any sect, were of so desirable a kind. Hence it was that serious Episcopalians consider the distinction which the Puritans made, relative to this subject, as more the result of needless fear than of real cause.

Thomas Lechford, a respectable lawyer, who resided several years in Massachusetts and returned to England in 1641,—made the subsequent remark on our ecclesiastical usages.<sup>2</sup> “There are dayes of fasting, thanksgiving, and prayers upon occasions, but no holy dayes,\* except Sunday. And why not set fasting dayes and times, and set feasts,—as well as set synods in the Reformed Churches? And why not holy dayes as well as the fifth of November, and dayes of Purim among the Jews?” This author hereby seems to imply that there could be no more harm in complying with the prescribed religious seasons of Episcopacy, than there was in keeping similar days, appointed by Presbyterian synods, as those of Geneva,—or in the Jewish observance of the stated Feast of Lots, or in obedience to the law of King James, which required every fifth of November to be spent as a national thanksgiving for the discovery of the gunpowder-plot in 1605. But had the primitive settlers of our soil met this argument, they would probably have replied in the following train of thought: We have no serious objections to these occasions. The synods of Reformers were calculated to keep them from papal hierarchy. The commemoration of deliverance from the powder-plot was fitted for a like effect. The celebration of the Jews’ being preserved from the machinations of Haman, guarded them against idolatry. The fixedness of these seasons was suited to produce opposite results from the fixedness which belongs to most of the holy days kept by the established church;—and, therefore, we do not reject the former as exerting a bad influence,—while we do the latter for such a tendency.

3. *Continuance*.—With views of this sort in relation to fasts and thanksgivings, the colonists of Plymouth felt obligated to continue them in their newly-adopted residence,—as suited to benefit them and their posterity. In a purpose so consistent with their profession, and expectations of help mainly from the hand of Om-

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\* Lechford here appears to mean those holy days that were kept in the established church. The Puritans so far held their fasts and thanksgivings holy, as to require, by penal enactments, that they should be spent with the sacredness of the Sabbath.



nipotence, they were not altogether without fear of having their liberty in this, as well as other respects, interrupted. The powerful exertions of Bishop Laud and his friends to crush all innovations on the ritual of Episcopacy, in British America, reached them in various ways. The settlement at Weymouth, in 1622, was intended as one check to their religious freedom. The party formed at Plymouth, in 1624, under the Rev. John Lyford, and sustained by the leading members of the company for this colony in London, had a like object. Still the Puritans, amid their perplexities, held fast to their creed with its practice. They excluded Mr. Lyford and his followers, who resorted to Gloucester the same year. At this location, there appears to have been persons of various persuasions, who probably observed fasts and feasts either at set dates or as occasion suggested. The first occupants of Naumkeag, afterward Salem, in 1626, with Roger Conant at their head, were the adherents of Mr. Lyford. They, of course, did not fully come into the ways of Plymouth. When Governor Endicott reached Salem, in 1628, though he may not have entirely separated from the conformists, yet he believed in the ecclesiastical order taught by John Robinson. In a letter of his to Governor Bradford, dated May 11, 1629, he remarked on a conversation which he had recently held with Dr. Samuel Fuller. His words were, "I rejoice much that I am by him satisfied touching your judgment of the outward form of God's worship. It is, as far as I can yet gather, no other than is warranted by the evidence of truth, and the same which I have professed and maintained ever since the Lord, in mercy, revealed himself unto me, being far from the common report, that hath been spread of you, touching that particular." Of course, the author of this passage was ready to harmonize with the inhabitants of Plymouth, as to the observance of fasts and thanksgivings. Succeeding emigrants to Salem, in 1629, were the Rev. Messrs. Higginson, Skelton, and others, who were of the class called in England church Puritans, and who still cleaved to the Episcopal denomination when embarking from their native shores. In their farewell address on so trying an exigency, they said, "We do not go to New England as separatists from the church of England, though we cannot but separate from the corruptions of it—but we go to practise the positive part of church reformation and propagate the gospel in America." Here is an intimation that they intended to cast off such forms,—as to holy days,—which, they thought, did not accord with the simplicity of

the gospel. So inclined, they kept several fasts on their passage,\* and, when reaching Salem, they were prepared to fall in with the views of Governor Endicott. As evidence of such a disposition, they, as members of his council, decided that it was best for John and Samuel Brown to leave the settlement, because they set up Episcopal worship. These two gentlemen charged such authorities with being separatists, and asserted, that as for themselves, they would "hold fast the forms of the church established by law." Subsequent emigrants to Massachusetts, for the most part, seconded the practice of the Salem colonists.

The planters of Connecticut carried thither, in 1635, similar conformity. So it was with those of Saybrook in the same year.

The first settlers of Providence, under Roger Williams, in 1636, and of Rhode Island, under John Clark, in 1638, differed, as is well known, from the rest of New England so far, as to withhold from civil rulers the power of law to enforce any occasional religious seasons.<sup>3</sup> Still such rulers were at liberty to recommend fasts and thanksgivings.

New Haven, while a separate colony from Connecticut, followed the course of Massachusetts, as to these days. "Soon after they arrived (in 1638) at Quinnipiack, in the close of a day of fasting and prayer, they entered into what they termed a plantation covenant."<sup>4</sup> The first records of their government, for about sixteen years, however, make no mention of fasts and thanksgivings,<sup>5</sup> but their laws prove beyond a doubt, that these days were kept from their first organization as a distinct colony.<sup>6</sup>

We now look at Maine. Various unsuccessful attempts were made to settle this part of our country, then extending only to the Kennebec river, at an early period. Its chief proprietor, Sir Ferdinando Gorges, being an Episcopalian, naturally selected rulers for it of his own persuasion, who promoted the cause of the national church. Hence it was that this colony, for the most part, did not adopt the Congregational forms. Thomas Jenner, a dissenting minister, in a letter of 1641, addressed to Governor Winthrop, observed, that while preaching at Saco, he had "not troubled the people with church discipline." He also stated, that he had advanced his opinion against "papal practices." These, as he subjoined, "I saw the people here were superstitiously addicted to." For such a step, he was charged by Mr. Vines, an inhabitant of that town, with striking "at the church of England."<sup>7</sup> This shows how

\* Hutchinson's Collections of Papers. Journal of Rev. Francis Higginson, pp. 37, 39, 41, 46.

very little Congregational customs were then tolerated in one of the few settlements of Maine. So it was in Falmouth, occupied in 1628, where a church of conformists was soon established; and at York, colonized in 1630, where its proprietor apparently purposed to have a bishop's diocese. From the wane of the royal cause in England, and the death of Charles I. in 1648-9, the sway of the national church diminished in this section of British America. At length, proposals began to be made by the people of Maine, in 1651, to come under the jurisdiction of Massachusetts, as a means of preserving social order among them, and even their very existence. The next year a majority of the inhabitants there assumed a like relation; and thence religious observances of dissenters prevailed among them.

From Maine we turn to New Hampshire. This colony was, at first, under Episcopal control. Dover and Portsmouth, both settled in 1623, appear to have been so influenced. The latter place soon had a church of conformists. But the occupation of Exeter by John Wheelwright and company, and of Hampton by Stephen Batchelor and associates, in 1638, introduced the Puritan forms there, as they had been at Dover in 1633, and were subsequently at Portsmouth about 1641. So that New Hampshire, as to the part claimed by Massachusetts, and also to the other part not so claimed, had thrown off, by the last date, Episcopal conformity and adopted the Congregational order. Such a change was accelerated by the distractions of England, and the consequent temporary invalidation of Mason's claims. When New Hampshire resumed the powers of a colony, in 1679,<sup>8</sup> they retained their prevailing attachment to the fasts and thanksgivings of the nonconformists. When their Assembly were about to meet in 1680, a public fast was observed to ask for a blessing on their proceedings. At the same time, however, while their charter allowed freedom of conscience to all Protestant denominations, it particularly required that encouragement should be given to Episcopalians.<sup>9</sup>

The stamp thus put on the public sentiment of the preceding portions of New England has never been effaced. Though the most of them have been changed from colonies to independent states, they still preserve the religious customs of their fathers.

No relinquishment of fasts and thanksgivings was made in Vermont or in Maine, when they assumed State privileges. With regard to the former of these two States,<sup>10</sup> they began to observe such days in 1778, and have not since faltered in so doing.

4. *Mode of their appointment.*—In Plymouth colony this was

done by the civil authority.<sup>11</sup> The practice there was embodied in a law of 1637—"that it be in the power of the governor and assistants to command solemn daies of humiliation by fasting, and also for thanksgiving as occasion shall be offered."<sup>12</sup> When deputies became a part of the General Court, they sometimes acted with the other branch of government in the designation of these seasons. Such times were also proposed and observed by the churches, either singly or collectively, as circumstances seemed to indicate. They were so continued by church and state in Plymouth colony till the arrival of the second charter of Massachusetts in 1692, when the former was incorporated with the latter colony.

The mode of Plymouth, as just described, did not materially differ from that of Massachusetts. Here, with respect to a fast at the choice of ministers for the Salem church in 1629, Mr. Gott informs us that it was ordered by Governor Endicott.<sup>13</sup> While the General Court was solely composed of magistrates till 1634, the governor, as their head and through their advice, did exercise like power. Subsequent to this, until the arrival of the second charter in 1692, he did not entirely lay aside such a practice. Besides, the council in their own name, even while there were chief magistrates, issued proclamations. The first printed document of this class, in the Massachusetts archives, is of the following tenor.<sup>14</sup>

"At a council held at Boston, September 8th, 1670. The council taking into their serious consideration the low estate of the churches of God throughout the world, and the increase of sin and evil amongst ourselves, God's hand following us for the same,—Do, therefore, appoint the two and twentieth of this instant September, to be a day of public humiliation throughout this jurisdiction, and do commend the same to the several churches, elders, ministers, and people, solemnly to keep it accordingly; hereby prohibiting all servile work on that day.

"By the Council,

"EDWARD RAWSON, *Secret.*"

The term council, as used here and elsewhere, included the name of the governor. In the same collection is a manuscript proclamation for thanksgiving in 1671, and similar papers for two fasts of 1675 and 1677, issued by such a body. The first printed proclamation for a thanksgiving to be found in the like depository, is of April 23, 1691, and is headed, "By the Governor and Council."<sup>15</sup> But, however, fasts and thanksgivings were appointed in Massachusetts singly by the council, and also, by the governor

through their advice, down to the year last named; still days of this description were more frequently ordered in the name of the General Court. As well known, there was a suspension of the charter governments in New England, from a part of 1686 to the spring of 1689. Of the two presidents, Dudley and Andros, in this period of the usurpation, the latter zealously promoted the Episcopal order. For the religious customs of the Puritans he had no partiality. Still, political policy so far prevailed with him that he continued them. As an instance of this, he, on the 19th of November, 1687, ordered,\* by advice of his council, that thanksgiving be observed on Thursday, December 1st, throughout his jurisdiction. While the rulers chosen by the people of Massachusetts were in power, they allowed the church to keep as many fasts and thanksgivings as they chose. Accordingly we find among their laws one of the succeeding tenor, passed in 1641. "Every church of Christ hath freedom to celebrate dayes of fasting and prayer and of thanksgiving, according to the word of God."<sup>16</sup> This was a confirmation of previous custom, which, as before, has ever since remained in New England.

With respect to this subject, as in the hands of the legislature, they continued some variation in the proclamations under the second charter. These documents were issued in the name of governor, council, and representatives, as in 1693; of his Excellency and council, as in 1700; and of governor by advice of council, as in 1733. The last mode of phraseology was that which was generally adopted after 1700, and so continued till the adoption of the constitution in 1780. But whatever variation of this kind existed, the representatives always claimed the right of having a concern in the appointment of fasts and thanksgivings. So inclined, they did not find their whole course smooth in relation to these seasons.

In 1696 they were severely reprov'd by the council for interference with them about the particular date when such an occasion should be kept. This difference did not call in question the propriety of the house to request the governor that he would designate seasons of this sort by consent of the council. In 1721, the representatives moved for a joint-committee of this body and of themselves, to prepare a proclamation for a fast. The council declined such a proposition, because they deemed it an anticipation

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\* He made proclamation, April 18, 1688, for public thanksgiving on the 29th, for prospective issue by the queen. He required that the 30th of January, 1689, be kept as a fast-day, to commemorate the decapitation of Charles I., "as ordered by statute for all the king's subjects."



of the governor's right.<sup>17</sup> But "he willing to conform to the house so far as would consist with maintaining his right of issuing proclamations, mentioned in the proclamation which he soon after published, that the appointment was by advice of council and upon motion from the house of representatives. But the house refused to meet him, and declared they had never made any such motion, and ordered that no members of the house should carry any proclamations to their towns for the present. The day was, however, observed as usual, except that one of the representatives (William Clark) of Boston would not attend public worship, but opened his warehouse as upon other days." The difficulty here described arose from the purpose of the house to unite with the council to prepare such a document independently of the governor, though to be published in his name.

The author, whose language on this topic has been just quoted, relates that, as stated by the board, the attempt of the representatives to participate in the composition of the order in question, was unprecedented. But there is a mistake on this point. For, it had been no uncommon thing for the house to draw up proclamations for fasts and thanksgivings and forward them to the council and governor for their approbation. Nor were these papers rejected as being improper. The chief magistrate, Samuel Shute, with whom the preceding difficulty took place, in his protest against Massachusetts before Parliament in 1723, which wellnigh caused the nullification of our charter, charged the house with undue interference in the appointments of fasts and thanksgivings. On this subject, Doctor Douglass stated, in 1749, that such days "ever since Governor Shute's complaints, have been appointed by the governor and council, at the desire of the house of representatives."<sup>18</sup> The practice here mentioned lasted till 1779. The next year it was discontinued. From this time, when the senate was formed, and, in most respects, assumed the previous duties of the council, fasts and thanksgiving have been recommended by the chief magistrate with advice of council.

As the genius of ecclesiastical and political usages of Massachusetts pervaded those of New Haven and Connecticut, the mode of designating fasts and thanksgivings in the two latter colonies was essentially the same as that in the former. Relative to more modern practice of Connecticut, we have the ensuing account. "The present mode is by the governor alone. This has been the practice since May, 1833. Before that time, the governor designated the day; but previous to the adoption of the constitution

in 1818, which abolished the October session of the General Assembly, the governor submitted his proclamation to the two houses of that body, and had their approbation. Between 1818 and 1833, the practice was the same, as it is now from the necessity of the case, because the General Assembly was not in session at or near the time of issuing the proclamation."<sup>19</sup>

Concerning the appointment of fasts and thanksgiving in Rhode Island, we have the subsequent passage. These days "were, in the earlier times of the state, occasionally recommended by the legislature. In 1789 commenced the annual thanksgiving in this State. The subject was introduced into the General Assembly by the late Judge Bicknell, then a representative from the town of Barrington, in pursuance of instructions from his constituents. Since then, a day has been set apart every year for that purpose, except only in 1801. Resolutions are generally introduced into the legislature at their session in October, recommending 'to the good people' of the State to observe a certain day as a day of public thanksgiving and praise, and requesting the governor to issue his proclamation of the resolutions so passed. Public fasts have never been recommended by our legislature at any stated seasons. I believe fasts and thanksgivings are and have been long held by advice of clerical bodies and individual churches."<sup>20</sup>

In relation to New Hampshire, we present the following:—"Our records as far back as 1698, show the appointment of fasts and thanksgivings by the governor with advice of his council." No doubt the representatives claimed and exercised the privilege of proposing such seasons to their chief magistrate. "I find from 1776, that a committee of the assembly was generally appointed to prepare a form for a proclamation, which would be adopted by the assembly and concurred in by the council, and receive the signature of the governor, then called president."<sup>21</sup> Since New Hampshire adopted their constitution in 1792, their fasts and thanksgivings have been appointed as in Massachusetts.

Concerning the mode under consideration, as practised in Vermont, we have the subsequent information. "Previous to the adoption of any constitution, and while the powers of government were exercised by a council of safety, they appointed a day of thanksgiving by resolution. After the first constitution, the General Assembly, in March, 1778, appointed a day of fasting and adopted a form of proclamation, and in October of the same year, they appointed a day of thanksgiving, and requested the governor to issue his proclamation therefor. There have been no resolu

tions of the General Assembly in relation to fasts since 1778, but they have been appointed by the executive: the proclamation has been issued by the governor, by and with the advice of the council. Resolutions for the appointment of days of thanksgiving are annually passed by the legislature, and, for nearly fifty years, the form has been to request the governor to appoint a day of thanksgiving, fixing the day."<sup>22</sup>

5. *Penalties*.—Another topic, connected with the fasts and thanksgivings of New England, are the penalties for not duly observing them.

As the magistrates of Plymouth colony *ordered* such days in 1623, and were empowered by law so to do, in 1637, it is implied that a penalty was affixed there to the violation of them, at a very early period. In 1650,<sup>23</sup> every person neglecting public worship is required to pay 10s. or to be publicly whipped. As this worship appears to have included that of fasts, thanksgivings, and lectures, a corresponding inference may be drawn as to the fine for not keeping them. In 1682, "it is enacted that none shall presume to attend servile worke, or labour, or attend any such sports on such dayes, as are or shall be appointed by the Court for humiliation by fasting and prayer, or for publicke Thanksgiving, on penalty of — shillings." The sum here omitted was probably 10s. The law, just described, continued in force till the annexation of Plymouth with Massachusetts.

As the rulers of Massachusetts colony had authority to command the observance of fasts and thanksgivings, they had like power to enforce the keeping of them.

In 1646,<sup>24</sup> the ensuing law was passed:—"Whereas the ministry of the word is established according to the order of the Gospel throughout this jurisdiction, every person shall duely resort and attend thereunto, respectively on the Lord's dayes and upon such public fast dayes and dayes of thanksgiving, as are to be generally observed by appointment of authority." This law required that each individual unnecessarily absent from such public meetings should be fined 5s. It will be perceived here, that the penalty for neglecting public worship on fasts and thanksgivings, was equal to that of neglecting like service on the Sabbath. With such a regulation Edward Randolph found fault, in his statement to the royal council, in 1676.<sup>25</sup> His words were, "Whoever shall observe Christmasse day or the like festivity, by forbearing to labour, feasting, or other way, shall pay 5s. ; and whosoever shall not resort to their meetings upon the Lord's day and such days of

fasting and thanksgiving as shall be appointed by authority, shall pay 5s. No days, commanded by the laws of England, to be observed or regarded.”\* How long such a fine was strictly imposed, cannot be particularly told at this late day. It was evidently in force, however, till 1780, because the proclamations for fasts and thanksgivings to this year, commanded them not to be desecrated with “servile labour.” Since the adoption of the constitution in Massachusetts, all fines, as well as legislation, about these religious occasions, have therein ceased.

During the separate jurisdiction of New Haven, they laid a fine of 5s. for each omission to attend worship on fast or thanksgiving days, as well as on the sabbath.<sup>26</sup>

With regard to fines, now in view, Connecticut pursued the course of the Bay colony. In 1650, they adopted the law on this subject previously enacted by Massachusetts. A penalty, for the violation of fasts and thanksgivings, was continued longer there than in any other part of New England. In 1791,<sup>27</sup> it was enacted that there should be abstinence from servile labour and recreation on these occasions, works of necessity and mercy excepted, on penalty of not above two dollars nor less than one. This rule, as is readily perceived, did not tally with that of 1650, so as to demand attendance on worship. It also made an exception as to public posts and stages, anciently unknown in our country. Prohibitions of the kind under consideration were repealed in 1833. From this year, fasts and thanksgivings have been *recommended* by the executive, and not ordered as formerly.

Relative to New Hampshire,<sup>28</sup> their proclamations for such seasons, before the adoption of their present constitution, contained clauses like the following:—“All servile work and recreation are forbidden;” but subsequently, instead of commanding, they advised to the observance of these days.† Hence, there is implicit

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\* The act against the keeping of Christmas in Massachusetts, was passed in 1659, when there was some prospect that Charles II. would be brought to his father's throne. This act was repealed in 1682. It is probable that, from the last date, the annual celebration of November 5th, so far as it had declined in New England, was revived and continued to be observed by processions of boys and young men, and bonfires, before the revolution of 1775. Since then, till forty years past, this was kept up by bonfires, and is now, to a very limited extent, in Rhode Island.

† In reference to such prohibitions, there was a singular occurrence, which may have produced a legal question of no small interest and concern. It was in the town of Colchester, under the jurisdiction of Connecticut. It is thus described by the original record. “At a legal Town meeting, held in Colchester, October



evidence that fines were required there by law for an infringement on fasts and thanksgivings prior to 1792, but not afterward.

Respecting Rhode Island, they appear to have had no fines for the non-observance of these religious occasions, nor have Vermont and Maine since they became States.

6. *Periodical Observance*.—A question, not unfrequently asked, is, When did fasts and thanksgivings, in New England, become periodical? By the term periodical, as here applied, we understand the following:—When did fasts begin to be appointed or kept in the spring of every successive year, by order of the legislature; and thanksgiving, in like manner, in the fall? For an answer to these inquiries we must not rely altogether, as some have, on what are called the General Court Records, now extant. There is but a solitary minute, and this relative to land, on such records of Plymouth colony, for the first three years. After this, till near the close of their separate jurisdiction, the designation of their fasts and thanksgivings was seldom placed with their legislative transactions. It is matter of fact, that such days were appointed by their public authorities as have no mention made of them among the proceedings of these rulers. No legislative records of Massachusetts, before the arrival of Governor Winthrop in 1630, are known to have been preserved. Those of them which succeed, fail to notice a number of fasts and thanksgivings, the observance of which was enjoined by the civil government. Similar facts apply to Connecticut and New Haven. Only three of each sort of these days are found on the books of the Connecticut General Assembly before 1650. The Journals of New Haven make not even a reference to such religious occasions, as before stated, for about sixteen of their first years. But other sources of information prove that there was no real deficiency of this kind. The printed laws of New Haven show that fasts and thanksgivings were common with them, from their very commencement as a colony, and had all the conservative restriction of the Sabbath. Who could

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29, 1705, it was voted, that whereas there was a Thanksgiving appointed to be held on the first Thursday of November, and our present circumstances being such, it cannot with conveniency be attended on that day, it is therefore voted and agreed by the inhabitants aforesaid, concluding the thing will not be otherways than well resented (or favorably received), that the second Thursday of November aforesaid shall be set apart for that service." Long and accredited tradition has uniformly related, that this suspension of a week was to afford the trader of the place an opportunity to replenish his exhausted articles of sweetening, and particularly that of molasses,—so that his customers might not forego the indulgence of their taste for pumpkin pies and other similar dainties.



reasonably suppose, that for such periods, so deficient in being recorded as to fasts and thanksgivings, New England would consent to deprive themselves of these interesting seasons? No person, correctly acquainted with their views, desires, habits, and condition. And yet, were we reduced to the necessity of relying altogether for testimony, in the present case, on their General Court journals, we should conclude that they did thus forget their obligations to God and to some of their best influences and interests.

But here the inquiry may be made, Why were the registers of their legislative doings so at fault? Several causes for this may be assigned. The appointment of these days was so in accordance with the opinions, wishes, and practice of the whole country, there was no call for a special record to be made of them among the transactions of the legislature. If a parallel case of this kind be asked for, it may be found in the total omission of noticing such an appointment, on the records of Massachusetts General Court, since the adoption of their constitution in 1780. Another cause was, that after deputies or representatives in Plymouth and Massachusetts made a part of their legislatures, they were, oftentimes, not in session so as to unite with the assistants or council in ordering fasts and thanksgivings; and, therefore, a record failed to be made of such an act more frequently than would otherwise have been. Besides, when the representatives were in session seasonably enough to participate in this act, they sometimes left it to the direction of the assistants. In omissions of this sort, we should naturally think, that the periodical fasts and thanksgivings would be more frequently unnoticed on the records, because generally known and expected, than those of more special occasions at other parts of the year. If the query is put, whether these omissions were all which are either suspected or known, we reply in the negative. There must have been, for instance, particular orders for the emission of one-penny pieces of the Pine-Tree money and of the Good-Samaritan shillings, at an early period, from the Massachusetts mint. But no orders of this class are visible on the journals of General Court. In view of the preceding considerations, we are justified in not restricting the number of fasts and thanksgivings, publicly ordered by our ancient authorities, to the numerical notices of them on the pages of their legislative proceedings. Indeed, the great probability is, that many more of such seasons were so appointed in the first periods of New England than at present, though this position is not confirmed by the

records of their legislatures. An opinion of this kind is favoured by the fact, that, in some years, wherein these days are mentioned by such records, two or three of each kind were kept in the course of one year. As instances on this point, Massachusetts journals give two fasts in 1639, and three in 1664; two thanksgivings in 1633, and two in 1637. These were distinct from those often observed by the churches either individually or collectively. A disposition, so manifested, must have been cherished and indulged from the remarkable trials and deliverances experienced by our fathers in their early history, as well as from their deep feeling of dependence on God and of their obligations to him. It would be absurd to conjecture that the pilgrims would keep so many of these seasons in one year, and then neglect them altogether for several successive years, in which they are not once alluded to by their legislative journals, when there were similar calls for a like observance every year. They were a people chargeable with no such inconsistency as here implied; not eaten up with a zeal for a dutiful and salutary custom at one period, and then entirely neglectful of it at another. Hence, we have a confirmation of the statement, that we should not make up our minds solely on the existing legislative records of New England, as to the number and dates of their fasts and thanksgivings.

Even from the foregoing considerations, it would not be paradoxical to venture the opinion, that such religious seasons have been periodical from the founding of New England. Here the question occurs, to what extent do legislative journals and other coincident proof confirm such a position? By the Connecticut records of General Court,<sup>29</sup> it appears that periodical thanksgivings, as well as fasts, began to be designated in 1650. In all reasonable probability, Massachusetts would not come short in this respect; for she was looked to rather as an example than otherwise. The records of the latter colony, so far as preserved, show that thanksgivings were appointed in the fall of 1633, 1637, 1638, 1639, 1654, 1656, 1659, 1662, 1665, 1666, 1667, 1669, 1670, 1672, 1673, 1676, 1677, 1680, 1681, 1682, 1684, etc. Besides these festival-days, the representatives left the matter of ordering one in 1648 to the council; and a paper shows that the latter body did designate another in 1671, of which no mention is known to have been made elsewhere. It may be proper to state that there were other thanksgivings, during the same period, ordered at dates different from those of such days, as just now enumerated.

With regard to fasts, designated by the Massachusetts authori-

ties in this time, though they were more in number, as contained on legislative records, than thanksgivings, yet there were less of them, as periodical, than of these festivals. But the nature of the case, the propriety of confessing human unworthiness and interceding for Divine blessing on the labours of the field, the pursuits of the sea, and other avocations of community in the vernal season, and the deep religious impression of our fathers that they ought not to omit such an obligation, force upon our minds the inference, that fasts would be even more likely to be appointed for the spring, than thanksgivings in the fall. It is very probable, that, if the regular journal of the assistants or council had been preserved, it would have supplied a large part of the vacancies, as to such holy days, which appear in the foregoing statements and remarks. For this assertion, we have the subsequent fact. From the fire of 1747, when all the minutes of the council for many previous years, except a few of general import, were destroyed, to 1765, there are notices of seventeen periodical appointments of thanksgivings, as well as the same number of periodical fasts, on the journals of this branch of the legislature, while the records of the general court contain only about five of such appointments of each kind. The reasons, so advanced to account for deficiencies of this sort in Massachusetts, would apply to similar deficiencies in the rest of New England jurisdictions. At this point, we may ask what should be our decision on the question before us? We perceive, that we ought not to depend altogether, for a reply, on the General Court records of New England now extant. We perceive from the journals of Connecticut, that fasts and thanksgivings were periodical there, and, from the same authority and concurrent reasons, were very probably so in other of its adjacent colonies, by 1650. And even if Connecticut journals did not afford such testimony, there are other considerations, which forbid the surrender of this inference. As to the periodical order in view, before the year just named, we are left to judge from the character and condition of our ancestors as well as from their recorded practice. This practice, so far as notice of it has come down to our knowledge, implies nothing contrary to such order, but from the manner in which it is mentioned, and the fact that, in several instances, no notice was taken of it, when actually existing, on the registers of legislation, strongly intimate, that this order commenced at the beginning of New England.

A single glance at the character and condition of the primitive colonists, instantly suggests that the Puritans would almost as

soon think of neglecting to cultivate the ground and still look for a harvest, as to omit a public fast in the spring, and of neglecting to gather in the abundance of their fields and still expect to be fed, as to omit the appointment of a thanksgiving in the autumn. This appears to be a legitimate conclusion under all the circumstances of the case. Hence, may we not reasonably make up our minds, that fasts and thanksgivings have been periodical from the first colonization of New England?

Nor is this inference invalidated by the objection, that it involves an implication contrary to the cause for which our fathers declined conformity with the established holy days of the Episcopal church. The truth is, had they kept their fasts and thanksgivings a single day before or after Passion week and Christmas, it would have broken up the association of the mind which was the object of their alteration. But in allowing them the sweep of several weeks for such days, they had ample scope to rid themselves of the charge of making a distinction without any difference.

## § 2. OBSERVANCE BY OTHER STATES.

WE have now reached the point where notice should be taken of fasts and thanksgivings in other parts of the United States. It is well known, that, in such portions as were under Episcopal discipline, these days were kept there, for a long period, according to the prescribed form of the English established church. The Lent and Christmas of those parts of our country were to them as the periodical fasts and thanksgivings of the Puritans. Their other similar seasons were to them, in some respects, like the additional ones of Congregationalists. As a matter of general concernment to all the British American colonies, they were, as previously expressed, required by the law of England, passed 1606, to keep an annual thanksgiving on the fifth of November, to commemorate the discovery of the gunpowder plot. It was subsequently enacted by the Parliament, that there should be a fast for the death of Charles I., and, also, a thanksgiving for the birth and accession of Charles II. to the throne, every successive year. While these laws were complied with in our Episcopal colonies, they seem to have been neglected, as to their religious observance, by the nonconformists of New England. In the year 1661, the legislature of Virginia incorporated the two last enactments with their laws.<sup>30</sup> Besides, when any great event transpired in England, either joyful or sorrowful, orders were received thence by the colo-



nists of our country, till the revolution of our independence, to keep thanksgivings or fasts, which was accordingly and punctually done.

In addition, fasts and thanksgivings, ordered by provincial and national congresses, have been observed throughout the Union.

Having thus cleared our way of these more general particulars, we will now look at individual sections of our republic. In none of these have the periodical fasts of New England ever been appointed by public authorities.\* Such occasions have been observed by various denominations of dissenters therein, whenever the exigencies of the temporal and spiritual condition of themselves, or neighbourhood, or country, seemed to require. Other denominations, who conform with the rituals of their respective churches, have had their holy days in the spring and winter and other established seasons.

As to annual thanksgivings, like those of New England, the only States which are known by the writer to have had them appointed by their chief magistrates, are New Jersey, New York, Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana. They have been observed in New Jersey for not less than a half-century. They began to be appointed by De Witt Clinton of New York, in 1819, and have been so continued† till the present year. For ten years they have been kept in Michigan; for six years in Ohio; and for three or four in Indiana. In these States, we are credibly informed, that thanksgiving is less and Christmas more observed, in proportion to the population, than in New England. As a substitute for thanksgiving, in the States which do not keep it, are Christmas and other similar seasons. The manner of observing these, as described by Lucian Minor, Esq., relative to Virginia, has a particular application to nearly all such States. His language is—"Christmas, a four days' holiday, maintains here its old English character of festivity, being the nearest resemblance to your November thanksgiving. Those four days and one day each at Easter and Whitsuntide, are the only stated holidays among us, and these are enjoyed by all colours and conditions, who choose, but mostly by all of the slaves."

Since these remarks were made, in 1841, for the first edition of this work, there has been an increasing inclination, in our Re-

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\* The Dutch government of New York appointed a fast to be kept March 4th, 1643-4, on account of Indian troubles; and a thanksgiving to be observed September 6th, 1645, for restoration of peace.

† The Executive of New York State, however, designated a general Fast for the month of April, 1841.



public, for the observance of annual thanksgivings. The ensuing States were noted, as complying with such a custom in the years which succeed them:—Kentucky, 1842; Georgia, 1843; Missouri and Maryland, 1844; Illinois, 1845; Louisiana, 1846; Delaware, Pennsylvania, Mississippi, Tennessee, Iowa, Wisconsin, Arkansas, Florida, 1847. So did the Territory of Oregon in the year last named. The cities of Charleston, S. C., Savannah, Mobile, and Washington kept a similar festival, 1845. In 1851, there were not more than three out of our thirty States, who failed to imitate the fathers of New England in so pleasant and desirable a practice.

Having thus travelled over the diversified course of our inquiry, we are reminded of the long-continued customs, which originated in religious opinions of various shades and tendencies. Whatever be the forms or times of worship associated with these customs, so sacred a service—if dutifully performed—is alike beneficial in promoting humility for our sinful deficiencies, and gratitude for our numerous mercies; in exalting the mind to God while an inhabitant of earth, and the soul to heaven, when disenthralled from its clayey tenement. Blessed indeed are they who so commune with Him in public, as to be partakers of His sanctifying presence in private, and, hereafter, to be filled with His fulness for ever.

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8. Clemens Alex. Strom. 7. p. 748. Compare Pearsonii Vindic. Ignat. part ii. c. 12.

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3. Denkwürdigkeiten, vol. i. p. 427.

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8. Belknap's New Hampshire, vol. i. p. 77.
9. Farmer's Belknap, p. 88.
10. Letter from Hon. Charles K. Williams.
11. Winslow's Relation, in Mass. Hist. Coll. first Sermon. vol. viii. p. 275.
12. MS. Plymouth Colony Records.
13. Letter from Charles Gott to Gov. Bradford.
14. Mass. Archives Ecclesiastical, vol. i. p. 17.
15. Mass. Archives Ecclesiastical, vol. ii. p. 57.
16. Mass. Laws Revised, 1649, Cambridge, p. 25.
17. Hutchinson's Hist. Mass. 3d. ed. vol. ii. p. 223.
18. Douglass' Hist. of America, vol. i. p. 495.
19. Letter from Hon. Thomas Day.
20. " " William Staples.
21. " " Josiah Stephens, Jr., Esq., Secretary of State, New Hampshire.
22. " " Hon. Charles K. Williams.
23. Plymouth Col. Laws.
24. Laws of Mass. ed. 1660.
25. Hutchinson's Collection of Papers.
26. New Haven Laws, p. 38.
27. Laws of Connecticut, 1796. p. 83.
28. Letter from Josiah Stephens, Jr.
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a. 597.

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# CHRONOLOGICAL INDEX.

Our Saviour born four years before the vulgar era, and in the year 4709 of the Julian Period—Crucified A. D. 84.

<i>A. D.</i>	<i>Roman Emperors.</i>	<i>Bishops, Eccl. Officers, and Writers.</i>
20	Augustus, d. 14.	
30	Tiberius, d. 37.	
40	Caligula, d. 48.	
50	Claudius, d. 54.	
60	Nero, d. 68.	Peter and Paul, martyrs at Rome.
70	Galba, d. 69.	
70	Vespasian, d. 79.	
80	Titus, d. 81.	Shepherd of Hermas.
90	Domitian, d. 96.	Clement, bishop of Rome.
100	Nerva, d. 98.	
110	Trajan, d. 117.	
110		Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, d. 116.
120	Hadrian, d. 138.	Papias, bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia.
130		Justin Martyr, d. 165.
140	Antoninus Pius, d. 161.	The Gnostics Marcion and Basilides.
150		Cornelius, bishop of Antioch.
160		Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, d. 167.
170		Montanus—The Montanists.
180	Marcus Aurelius, philosopher, d. 180.	Anicet, bishop of Rome.
		Hegesippus, ecclesiastical historian.
		Celsus, against the Christian religion.
		Soter, bishop of Rome.
		Claudius Apollinarius, bp. of Hierapolis.
		Melito, bishop of Sardis.
		Bardesanes, the Gnostic.
		Eleutherus, Roman bishop.
		Dionysius, bishop of Corinth.
		Theophilus, bishop of Antioch.
		177. Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, d. 203.
		Pantænus, catechist in Alexandria.
		Tertullian at Carthage.
180	Commodus, d. 192.	

*Historical Events.*

50. Presbyters, (*πρεσβυτεροι=επισκοποι*), an order for the management of church affairs.—Baptism by immersion.—Confession of belief made at baptism.
60. Deacons.—Deaconesses.—Meetings of Christians in private houses.—Daily meetings for divine service.—Daily instruction by prayer, singing, and reading of the Old Testament.—Exclusion of unworthy members from the church.—Love-feast connected with the communion.
70. Common care for the poor.—Contributions to other churches.—Church officers carry on their former occupations.—The Ebionites use unleavened bread in the supper.—Choice to church offices usually by church officers and the churches.
80. Particular days selected for the worship of God.—The keeping of Sunday.—Consecration to church offices by the laying on of hands.—The celebration of the Jewish sabbath by the Jewish Christians continued.—The yearly feasts of the Jews (passover and pentecost) continue among the Jewish Christians.—One of the presbyters presides in the college of presbyters.
90. Country churches with their own officers.
100. Reading of the New Testament Scriptures in the churches.
110. The communion connected with the meetings for divine service, particularly with those on Sunday.—Catechumens.—Preparation for baptism by fasting and prayer.—Growing importance of the president in the college of presbyters.
120. The celebration of marriages brought into connection with the church.—Heathen Christians begin to celebrate the yearly feasts, but with altered views.—Voluntary offerings (*προσφοραι*) at the celebration of the communion. Traces of a separation of divine service into two parts.
130. In divine service the Scriptures are explained and applied by the minister.—Then follows a simple celebration of the supper.—The deacons carry the elements to the absent members.
140. The Scriptures and church fathers are read in divine service.—Epistolary correspondence between churches (*formatæ*).—Formula of baptism as generally prevalent mentioned in Justin Martyr.
150. During the persecutions the Christians hold their meetings in retired places.—Laying on of hands in baptism.—Difference about the celebration of the passover between the oriental and occidental churches.—Infant baptism.—Those that have been regenerated are incorporated into the body of the church by baptism.
160. First appearance of buildings appropriated to public worship.—Polycarp has a conference with Anicetus on the disagreement respecting the passover.—Images and pictures in the houses of Christians.—Weekly or monthly collections in the meetings for public worship, for the poor and the sick.—Special fasts for the benefit of those in distress.—The use of the sign of the cross in all the actions and events of life.—Transfer of the ordinances of the Jewish Sabbath to Sunday.
170. Catechists.—Contest about the passover in Asia Minor.—Deaconesses; who are widows above sixty years old, receive the usual ordination.—In the Lord's supper, the common bread, and wine mingled with water, were used.—Images of Christ among the heretics.—The deaconesses are consulted in the celebration of marriage. The bride and bridegroom partake of the Lord's supper with each other.—Abrenuntiatio at baptism and trine immersion.—More definite form given to the confessions made at baptism.—Easter-eve and Whitsuntide favourite times for administering baptism in the whole church.—Celebration of Easter-night by vigils.—Festival of fifteen days from Easter to Whitsuntide.—Catholic epistle of Dionysius of Corinth.
180. The Christian custom of *burying* the dead. Church festival in commemoration of the dead immediately after death and on its anniversaries.—Among the Catholics the division of the form of worship into two parts is the universal custom.—Tertullian opposed to infant baptism.—The heretics on their entrance into the Catholic church are, in Asia Minor and North Africa, again baptized; in Rome, they are treated as penitents.—In the oriental church divine service on the sabbath, and no fasts.

<i>A. D.</i>	<i>Roman Emperors.</i>	<i>Bishops, Eccl. Officers, and Writers.</i>
180		
190	Pertinax, d. 193.	Victor, bishop of Rome, d. 202. Clemens, catechist in Alexandria. Caius, presbyter in Rome. Polycrates, bishop of Ephesus.
	Septimius Severus, d. 211.	
200		
		Zephyrinus, bishop of Rome, d. 218. 203. Origen, catechist in Alexandria.
210	Caracalla, d. 217. Macrimus, d. 218. Heliogabalus, d. 222.	Demetrius, bp. of Alexandria, d. 232.
220	Alexander Severus, d. 235.	228. Origen, ordained presbyter at Cæsarea. Hippolitus, bishop. Origen flees to Cæsarea in Palestine.
230	Maximus the Thracian, d. 238.	233. Heraclius, bishop of Alexandria. Julius Africanus.
240	Gordianus III. d. 244. Philip the Arabian, d. 249. Decius Trajanus, d. 251.	Dionysius, head of the catechetical school in Alexandria. Minucius Felix, a lawyer in Rome. 244. Gregory Thaumaturgus, bishop of Neo-Cæsarea, d. 270. Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, d. 265. 248. Cyprian, bp. of Carthage, d. 258.
250	Trebonianus Gallus I. d. 253. Gallus Volusianus, d. 253. Valerian, d. 260.	Fabian, bishop of Rome, d. 251. Cornelius, bishop of Rome, d. 252. Novatian. Lucius, bishop of Rome. Stephanus, bishop of Rome, 253-257. Firmilianus, bishop of Cæsarea in Capadocia, d. 269. 254. Origen d. — Sixtus II. bishop of Rome, d. 258.
260	Gallienus, d. 268.	Dionysius, bishop of Rome, d. 270. Sabellius. Paul of Samosata, bishop of Antioch, 265-269.
	Claudius Gothicus, d. 270.	
270	Aurelianus, d. 275. Tacitus, d. 276. Aurelius Probus, d. 282.	Commodianus. Felix, bishop of Rome, d. 275. Mani, d. 277. Eutychianus, bishop of Rome, d. 283. Methodius, bishop of Tyre.

*Historical Events.*

180. In the Romish church and other places of the West, fasts on the Sabbath.—Attempts to determine the day of Christ's birth. Perhaps a celebration of it in Egypt (?)—In the churches an altar and pulpit (pulpitum, suggestus.)—The office of readers. The performance of particular penances by the penitents.
190. Images of Christ among the heathen.—Symbolical rites in baptism.—Anointing after baptism.—Use of milk and honey.—Kiss of peace.—The laying on of hands as a concluding act, regarded as particularly important.—Contest between the Christians of Asia Minor and of Rome respecting the celebration of the passover.—197. Victor of Rome withdraws from the fellowship of the Christians of Asia Minor.—The college of the presbyters still exists in subordinate connection with the bishop.
200. Public discussions upon the baptism of heretics in North Africa.—Communion in private houses in North Africa.—The birthday of the martyrs celebrated.—A house of public worship in Edessa.
210. Introduction of Old Testament ideas of a particular priesthood into the Christian church.—The clergy, as a body, called *κληρος, κληρικοί, ordo*, in distinction from the *λαος, plebs. laici*.—The catechumens divided into classes by Origen.
220. Choice of bishop by the provincial bishops in connection with the adjacent churches.—The symbol of baptism, the rite of baptism, the Lord's prayer, and some church-songs kept concealed from the catechumens.
230. Origen gave theological instruction in Cæsarea in Palestine.—Hippolytus writes upon the disagreement of the East and West in respect to sabbatical fasts, and the contest about the passover.—Composed a *canon paschalis*.—Opposers of infant baptism in Egypt.—Candidates for baptism exorcised. Consecration of the water.—Houses of public worship become more frequent.—The clergy are not permitted to become guardians, or to engage in any worldly business.—The churches provide for the support of their clergy.—Comparison of the Christian clergy with the Jewish priests. *Episcopus* = *Summus sacerdos*, *Presbyteri* = *Sacerdotes*, *Diaconi* or *Clerici* (generally) = *Levitæ*.
240. Infant communion in Africa, afterward also in the East.—Clinic baptism.—The laying of hands on the newly baptized begins to be regarded as the appropriate act of none but the bishop.—The communion is extended to the sick and dying.—Frequent and large church edifices.—Provincial synods common in Africa and proconsular Asia. The whole body of the clergy and the people participate in them.—Contests of the bishops and presbyters in Rome and Africa.—Subdeacons. Acolyths. Exorcists. Ostiarii.—*Doctores audientium* in Africa.—Cyprian consults with the presbyters upon the affairs of the church. Sometimes the advice of the whole church is asked.
250. Easter-sabbath ■ common fast-day in the church.—*Libelli pacis* numerously distributed by the confessors.—The people take part in the elections to the church offices, particularly in the election of bishops and presbyters.—The bishop nominates the lower clergy.—Pope, title of illustrious bishops.—Synods in respect to penitents in Asia Minor.—Triumph of the Episcopal over the Presbyterian system.—Gregory Thaumaturgus permits banquets to be introduced into the festivals in honour of the martyrs.—252. Infant baptism at the Council of Carthage declared to be necessary. Anointing at baptism required by Cyprian.—253. Stephen of Rome withdraws fellowship from the Christians of Asia Minor on account of the baptism of heretics.—Two councils in North Africa confirm the old African principles upon the subject of the baptism of heretics; on this account Stephen excommunicates the North Africans.—The African synod, in the autumn of 256, declare in favour of the customs of the African church.
260. The practice of cheering the preacher during the delivery of his sermon.—The Lord's supper has become more complicated and splendid.
270. Fixed formularies for the administration of this rite are formed.—Catalogues of the members of the church and of Christians that have died ■ kept.

<i>A. D.</i>	<i>Roman Emperors.</i>	<i>Bishops, Eccl. Officers, and Writers.</i>
280	Aurelius Carus, regent with Carinus, d. 283. Numerianus, d. 284. Diocletian with Maximian, from 286 to 305, regents for the emperors Galerius and Constantine Chlorus.	Pierius and Theognostus in Alexandria. Caius, bishop of Rome, d. 296.
290		Pamphilus, Pres. in Cæsarea. Marcellinus, bishop of Rome, d. 304. Lucian and Dorotheus, Pres. in Antioch.
300	306. Constantius Chlorus, d. Constantine, Maxentius, Maximianus, Galerius, Severus, and Maximin, rulers. 307. Severus d. succeeded by Licinius.	Peter, bishop of Alexandria, d. 311. Marcellus, bishop of Rome, d. 309. Arnobius, orator in Sicca. Eusebius, bishop of Rome, 311. Melchiades, bishop of Rome, d. 314.
310	Maximian, d. 311. Galerius, d. 312. Maxentius, d. 313. Maximinus, d.	Lactantius. Alexander, bishop of Alexandria. Sylvester, bishop of Rome, d. 335.
320	Lucinius, d. 324. Constantine sole emperor, d. 337.	Arius in Alexandria, d. 336. Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea in Palestine, d. 340. Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia. Eustathius, bishop of Antioch. Alexander, bishop of Constantinople. Athanasius, bp. of Alexandria, d. 373.
330	Constantine II. d. 340. Constantius, d. 361. Constans, d. 350.	Juvenus. Marcus, bishop of Rome, d. 336. Julius I. bishop of Rome, d. 352. Macarius, Sen. et Jun. Julius Firm. Maternus. Gregorius, bishop of Alexandria. 342. Macedonius, bishop of Constantinople. Eusebius, bishop of Emesa, d. 360. Leontius, bishop of Antioch. Hilarius, bishop of Pictavium, d. 368.
340		
350		Liberius, bishop of Rome, 352-55 and 58-66. Felix, bishop of Rome, 355-58. Cyrill, bishop of Jerusalem, d. 386. Zeno, bishop of Verona. Hilary, Dea. Luciferit.



*Historical Events.*

280. Infant baptism common among the Persian Christians.
290. Pamphilus establishes a theological school in Cæsarea.—The church year begins with Easter festival.—Attempt to introduce images into the churches.
300. Peculiar dress of the clergy.—Beginning of sacred hermeneutics.—The beginnings of the school at Antioch.—305. The Council of Elvira forbids images in churches.—The splendid church in Nicomedia destroyed.—The council at Elvira enjoins sabbatical fasts, censures the irregularities in the keeping of vigils, and limits the festival of Whitsuntide to one day.—In the Romish church the beginning of an eighty-four years' Easter cycle.—The council at Elvira determines the duration of the catechumenate.—The practice of sending consecrated bread as a sign of church fellowship.—The subterranean vaults of Rome (catacombs) used for Christian burial-places.—Christian emblems, pictures, carving on the coffins, and funeral-lamps in the niches of the walls.
310. The council at Arles gives laws respecting the baptism of heretics.—Churches are solemnly dedicated to the worship of God.—The order of rural bishops in most places suppressed.—Regular division of the penitents into classes.—Easter cycle of nineteen years; perhaps established by Eusebius of Cæsarea.—Church in Tyre built by Paulinus.
320. Establishment of the canonical age for bishops and of seven as the number of deacons.—Exclusion of such as had received clinic baptism from the rank of clergy.—Ecumenical synods.—Laws against taking those who have been penitents and neophytes into church offices.—Fixed regulations respecting the number and time of the provincial synods.—Altars mostly of wood.—Constantine and his mother very active in building churches in Asia and Europe.—The church of St. Sophia built.—Several basilicæ are granted to the Christians.—321. (In March and June) decrees of Constantine in respect to the observance of Sunday. His orders respecting the army. Law for the religious observance of Friday.—325. The Nicene Council ordains a uniform celebration of the passover for the churches, and commits to the Alexandrians the calculation of Easter.—Celebration of a festival of the Ascension.—Four classes of catechumens.—Arius, a writer of sacred songs.—In the public worship, particular prayers for catechumens, energumens, and penitents.
330. Archpresbyters. Archdeacons. Favourite division of churches into three parts—ante-temple, nave, and bema or sanctuary.—At the feast of Epiphany the celebration of the passover is announced. The oriental eighth of Whitsuntide a general martyr festival.—Supplications for the repose of the souls of the dead.—The pretended discovery of the cross in the Holy Land promoted the superstition about the use of the sign of the cross.
340. Bishops and emperors exert an important influence upon church elections.—341. Decision upon the rights of provincial synods. New restrictions upon the country bishops.—344. Decision upon the passage of the bishop through the different grades of the clergy. The installation of country bishops prohibited.—Images in many oriental churches.—341. Decision in Antioch upon the celebration of the passover.—Festival of the Maccabees in Syria.—Anniversary festival in commemoration of the dedication of churches.—Celebration of the festival of the Birth of Christ in Rome (on the 25th of December).—The ceremonies before and at baptism have become complicated. Anointing before and after baptism. The changing of the name at baptism is practised. The delaying of baptism a somewhat general fault, particularly of the oriental churches.
350. Church singers. In the East the emperors are allowed to go into the bema.—Ærius urges a reformation of life in the church, and is particularly opposed to distinction of rank in the church.—In Gangra, Sunday fasts prohibited.—The heathen calends of January kept among the Christians as a fast-day.—Responsive singing introduced by the monks into the church of Antioch.—Hilarius of Pictavium a writer of hymns.—Liturgies are written (?) Preparatory exorcism on the days previous to baptism by Cyril of Jerusalem.—Ærius attacked the false notion of the efficacy of prayers for the dead.

A. D.	Roman Emperors.	Bishops, Eccl. Officers, and Writers.
360	361. Constantius, d. Julian the Apostate, d. 363. Jovian, d. 364. Valentinian I. in the West, d. 375. Valens in the East, d. 378.	Ærius, presb. in Sebaste. Ephraem the Syrian, dea. of Edessa, d. 378. Hieronymus Stridon, d. 420. Rufinus of Aquileia, d. 410. Epiphanius, bishop of Constantia, d. 403. Damasus, bishop of Rome, d. 384.
370	Gratian, d. 383. Valentinian II. d. 392. Theodosius in the East.	Optatus, bishop of Milevi. Basil, bishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, d. 379. Gregory, bishop of Nyssa, d. after 394. Martin, bishop of Tours, d. after 400. Amphilochius, bishop of Iconium, d. after 394. Diodorus, bp. of Tarsus, d. about 390. Ambrose, bishop of Milan, d. 397. Philastrius, bishop of Brixia. Gregory Nazienzen, bishop of Constantinople, d. 391. Didymus, president of the catechetical school at Alexandria, d. 395. Jovian, monk in Rome. Apollinaris, bishop of Laodicea. Siricius, bishop of Rome, d. 398. Theophilus, bp. of Alexandria, d. 412. Johannes Chrysostom. 386. Pres. in Antioch. 398. Bishop of Constantinople, d. 407. Asterius, bishop of Amasia. Severianus, bishop of Gabala, d. after 408.
380		
390	392. Theodosius sole emperor, d. 395.	Augustine, bishop of Hippo, d. 430. Theodorus, bp of Mopsvestia, d. 429. Palladius the Younger, bishop of Aspona, d. before 431. Severus Endelevchius. Gaudentius, bishop of Brixia. Anastasius I. bishop of Rome, d. 402. Sulpitius Severus, presb. d. 420.

*Historical Events.*

350. A special burial service.—Solemnization of funerals. *Λογοὶ ἐπιταφιοί*, particularly in the East.
360. Itinerant presbyters appointed in the place of country bishops.—Theological school at Edessa.—The teaching of heathen literature in Christian schools forbidden by Julian. He establishes a Christian institution afterward among the heathen.—The office of *œconomus* (steward of the church).—Benevolent institutions of every kind proceeding from the church, in the cities and in the country, particularly in the East.—Western churches begin to lose their importance.—Altars built of stone.—Church laws for the celebration of Sunday, the sabbath and the quadregesima.—Julian celebrates Epiphany in Vienna. Martyr-festivals, with vigils, very frequent. Dies stationum (stationary days) continue to be kept in Egypt, Asia Minor, Constantinople, and in other places.—Imperial pardons granted at Easter.—Council of Laodicea forbids the singing of apocryphal psalms in the churches and the holding of love-feasts in the churches.—Basilus, a promoter of responsive singing in the churches.—Ephraem composes church hymns.—The practice of carrying consecrated bread as though it possessed magical powers.—The composition of little doxologies by the Anti-Arians is opposed in Cappadocia.—The office of *copiatæ*.—The practice of crowning newly-married people with wreaths, of veiling the bride, etc. retained. The Council of Laodicea forbids improper usages at weddings and the celebration of marriage in the time of the quadregesimal fasts.
370. Heathen temples are converted into Christian churches.—During the Great Week in Cappadocia daily morning and evening service.—A local festival in Alexandria in commemoration of the earthquakes.—Epiphany the time for baptism in the East.—Basil of Cæsarea a zealous liturgist.—Ambrose transfers responsive singing to the churches of the West, composes hymns for the church, and does away the love-feasts.—The chapels of the martyrs are used for burying-places in Cappadocia.—Christian family-vaults.
380. Church *ἐκδοχοί*.—Christian poor-houses and hospitals in Italy.—The office of penitentiary presbyter abolished.—The Lateran and St. Peter's church in Rome.—Epiphanius opposed to having images in churches.—Baptisteries in or near the church.—386. Renewed order of the emperor in relation to the celebration of Sunday.—Disagreement of Rome and Alexandria as to the celebration of Easter.—Different practice in the oriental churches in respect to sabbath fasts. The Romish church warmly defends her own usage in respect to it.—386. The festival of Christ's birth celebrated in Syria on the 25th of December.—Decree of the Anti-Priscillians against partaking of the Lord's supper out of the church.—Complaints against theatrical singing in the church.—381. Decree of the Œcumenical Council respecting those that rebaptized heretics.—More fixed regulations respecting church-reading.—Siricius of Rome forbids baptism in Epiphany.—Images of the cross very frequent.—Images of Christ are still opposed.—In the Romish church, even in espousals, the blessing of the priest was necessary.—Theodosius revived the Roman law that burying-places should be without the city.
390. Missions are prompted by Chrysostom.—A mission institute at Constantinople for the Goths.—398. State laws respecting the choice of monks to clerical offices, and respecting the appointment of country clergy.—Decrees of the Western church in relation to the trial of the clergy.—392 (and 389) Laws of the empire to suspend ordinary business eight days before and eight days after Easter.—393. Evening communion on dies viridum.—In Antioch, on Good Friday, meetings for Divine service in the churches of the martyrs.—The Donatists oppose the festival of Epiphany.—The birthday of Christ as determined at Rome, generally adopted in the West.—The birth of John Baptist celebrated on the 24th of June. Heathen usages in the celebration of festivals.—393. The reading of uncanonical books, salutation by the reader, and the distribution of the eucharist to the dead forbidden.—The bishops alone confer confirmation. In Rome, no heretic may be rebaptized.—Repasts for the poor take the place of the old love-feasts.—The custom of employing mourning-women is introduced into the church

A. D.	Roman Emperors.	Bishops, Eccl. Officers, and Writers.
<div data-bbox="194 201 470 223">DIVISION OF THE EMPIRE.</div> <div data-bbox="177 230 496 279"> <div data-bbox="177 230 310 279">Western Rom. Empire.</div> <div data-bbox="360 230 496 279">Eastern Rom. Empire.</div> </div>		
400	<div data-bbox="166 284 303 333">Honorius, d. 423.</div> <div data-bbox="344 284 498 333">Arcadius, d. 408.</div> <div data-bbox="344 333 498 378">Empress Eudocia.</div>	<div data-bbox="529 335 881 357">Paulinus, bishop of Nola, d. 431.</div> <div data-bbox="529 357 912 380">Innocent I. bishop of Rome, d. 417.</div> <div data-bbox="529 380 886 402">Atticus bishop of Constantinople.</div> <div data-bbox="529 402 653 425">Prudentius.</div>
	Theodosius II. d. 450.	Vigilantius, presb. in Barcelona. Victor of Antioch.
410	14. Pulcheria Augusta.	<div data-bbox="529 640 700 663">Nilus the monk.</div> <div data-bbox="529 663 783 685">Pelagius and Cælestius.</div> <div data-bbox="529 685 881 708">Joannus Cassianus, d. after 432.</div> <div data-bbox="529 708 912 730">Cyril, bishop of Alexandria, d. 444.</div> <div data-bbox="529 730 907 753">Isidorus of Pelusium, d. about 440.</div> <div data-bbox="529 753 886 775">Zosimus, bishop of Rome, d. 418.</div> <div data-bbox="529 775 912 798">Boniface I. bishop of Rome, d. 422.</div> <div data-bbox="529 798 840 821">Possidius, bishop of Calama.</div> <div data-bbox="529 821 855 843">Synesius, bishop of Ptolemais.</div> <div data-bbox="529 843 907 866">Philostorgius, ecclesiastical writer.</div> <div data-bbox="529 866 933 888">Cælestinus I. bishop of Rome, d. 432.</div> <div data-bbox="529 888 933 911">Vincentius of Lirinum, d. before 440.</div> <div data-bbox="529 911 954 973">Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople, d. about 440.</div>
420	Valentinian III. d. 455.	Theodoret, bp. of Cyrus in Syria, d. 457.
<div data-bbox="91 1003 959 1100">N. B. The church history of Socrates extends from 306 to 439, (continued by Evagrius to 594;) that of Sozomen from 323 to 423; that of Philostorgius, an Arian bishop, from 300 to 425; that of Theodoret from 325 to 429; that of Evagrius, continuator of Socrates and Theodoret, from 431 to 594.</div>		
430		<div data-bbox="529 1105 798 1128">John, bishop of Antioch.</div> <div data-bbox="529 1128 938 1150">Proclus, bp. of Constantinople, d. 446.</div> <div data-bbox="529 1150 871 1173">Hilary, bishop of Arles, d. 449.</div> <div data-bbox="529 1173 907 1196">Sixtus III. bishop of Rome, d. 440.</div> <div data-bbox="529 1196 954 1218">Peter Chrysologus, bp. of Ravenna, d. 458.</div>
440		<div data-bbox="529 1218 923 1241">Barsumas, bishop of Nisibis, to 489.</div> <div data-bbox="529 1241 866 1263">Ibas, bishop of Edessa, to 457.</div> <div data-bbox="529 1263 855 1286">Leo I. bishop of Rome, d. 461.</div> <div data-bbox="529 1286 850 1308">Salvianus, presb. in Massilia.</div> <div data-bbox="529 1308 772 1331">Socrates the historian.</div> <div data-bbox="529 1331 778 1354">Sozomen the historian.</div>
450	<div data-bbox="350 1439 503 1487">Pulcheria, d. 453.</div> <div data-bbox="171 1486 503 1534">Ricimer, d. 472.</div> <div data-bbox="350 1534 503 1579">Marcian, died 457.</div> <div data-bbox="350 1579 503 1628">457. Leo I. the Thracian.</div>	<div data-bbox="529 1354 886 1376">Dioscurus, bishop of Alexandria.</div> <div data-bbox="529 1376 886 1399">Proterius, bishop of Alexandria.</div> <div data-bbox="529 1399 902 1421">Flavian, bishop of Constantinople.</div> <div data-bbox="529 1421 788 1444">Symeon Stylites, d. 460.</div> <div data-bbox="529 1444 897 1466">Paschasinus, bishop of Lilybæum.</div> <div data-bbox="529 1466 824 1489">Maximus, bishop of Turin.</div> <div data-bbox="529 1489 850 1512">Mamertus, bishop of Vienna.</div> <div data-bbox="529 1512 933 1534">Gennadius, bishop of Constantinople.</div> <div data-bbox="529 1534 938 1557">Timotheus Ælurus, bp. of Alexandria.</div> <div data-bbox="529 1557 772 1579">Arnobius the younger.</div> <div data-bbox="529 1579 871 1637">Hilary, bishop of Rome, d. 468.</div>

*Historical Events.*

390. Alms are distributed in memory of the dead.—Images are allowed in the East.
400. 407. Defensors of the church established.—408. Laws of the emperor for the establishment of episcopal jurisdiction.—409. Laws giving the bishops the oversight of the prisons.—Paulinus is active in building churches in Nola and Fundi.—401. Request of the Africans to the emperor to restrain public amusements on Sunday.—Vigilantius opposes the vigils.—Celebration of the death of Theodosius in Constantinople.—Innocent of Rome establishes the sabbatical fast by a law of the church.—Celebration of the anniversary of the ordination of bishops.—Family communion continues in many churches of the East and West.—Practice of vicarious baptism among the pseudo-Marcionites in Syria.—A pretended hymn of Christ among the Priscillianists.—The burial of the dead the common custom.—Bishops interred in the churches.—Feasts at the graves of the dead, with many abuses accompanying.
410. 416. Office of the parabolani in Constantinople.—418. Increase of the parabolani to 600.—Paulinus favours the use of images in churches and baptisteries, particularly for the instruction of the country people.—In the East complaints of there being too many images in the churches.—Representation of the sign of the cross in churches.—Inscriptions in and upon churches.—Contest in North Africa about the sabbatical fast.—Cyril improves the Easter-table of Theophilus.—Celebration of the Festum Stephani in North Africa; (still earlier in the interior of Italy.)—In the oriental churches, candles are lighted while the Gospels are read.—Theodosius II. diminishes the number of the copiatæ.
420. In the East the people still take part in the church elections.—Votive offerings in the churches, particularly in the chapels of the martyrs.—425. Theatrical exhibitions on Sunday and on the high church festivals forbidden by the emperor.—In Egypt, a separate celebration of the festival of Christ's birth.—Celebration of the feast of annunciation.
430. Office of the Apocrisiarii.—The celebration of the Quadrigesimal fasts is still different in different ecclesiastical provinces.—No definite laws for the keeping of fasts yet fixed.—Prostration of the people on the exhibition of the elements of the supper (?)
440. 441. The appointment of deaconesses forbidden in the West.—Crosses upon the altar.—Altars richly ornamented.—Councils are held in the baptisteries.—Contentions about the Easter festival of the year 444.—The Romans take the side of the Alexandrians.—Festum cathedræ Petri in the Romish church.—Remains of heathen customs which became mingled in the Roman celebration of Christ's birth.—New contest about the calculation of Easter.—Leo of Rome yields to the Alexandrians.—Infant baptism a common church ordinance.—The Trisagion Hymn is altered.
450. 451. The office of œconomus established by law.—The bishops have the spiritual oversight of the cloisters.—Church Lectionarii in the Gallic churches.



<i>A. D.</i>	<i>Roman Emperors.</i>	<i>Bishops, Eccl. Officers, and Writers.</i>
460	Anthemius.	Timotheus, bishop of Alexandria. Simplicius, bishop of Rome, d. 488. Peter the fuller.
470	474. Leo. II. 475. Romulus Augustus. The Western empire is divided into several new states.	Sidonius Apollinaris, bp. of Clermont. Faustus of Rhegium, d. after 490. Acacius, bishop of Constantinople. Petrus the monk, bishop of Alexandria. Victor, bishop of Vita. Gennadius, presb. of Masillon, d. af. 498. Vigilius, bishop of Tapsus. Macedonius, bishop of Constantinople. Felix III. bishop of Rome, d. 492. Flavian, bishop of Antioch.
480	476. Odoaster, king of Italy and Noricum.	
481. Clovis I. d. 511.		Gelasius I. bishop of Rome, d. 496. Anastasius II. bishop of Rome, d. 498. Avitus, bishop of Vienna.
490	491. Anastasius emperor until 518.	Symmachus, bishop of Rome, d. 514. Boethius, d. 525. Epiphanius, the historian of the church. Theodorus, historian of the church.
500		Dionysius the small. Cæsarius, bishop of Arles, d. 542.
510		Hormisdas, bishop of Rome, d. 523. Philoxenus, bishop of Hieapolis. Fulgentius, bishop of Ruspe, d. 533. Trocopius of Gaza.
	518. Justin I. to 527.	John of Cappadocia, bishop of Constantinople, d. 520. Epiphanius, bishop of Constantinople.
520	526. Atalaric, king of the Ostrogoths.	John I. bishop of Rome, d. 526. Felix IV. bishop of Rome, d. 530. Boniface II. bishop of Rome, d. 532.
530	527. Justinian to 565. 534. Theodat, k. of Ostrog. 536. Vitiges, k. of Ostrog.	John II. bishop of Rome, d. 535. Agapet I. bishop of Rome, d. 536. Anthemius, bishop of Constantinople Silverius, bishop of Rome. Vigilius, bishop of Rome, d. 555. Fulgentius, dea. at Carthage, d. before 551.
540	540. Totila, king of Ostrog.	Cosmas Indicopleustes. Aurelius Cassiodorus, d. after 562. Primasius, bishop of Adrumetum. Facundus, bp. of Hermiane, d. about 570.
550	552. Tejas, k. of Ostrog. 550. Chlotar, k. of France.	Junilius, African bishop. Pelagius I. bishop of Rome, d. 560. Propius of Cæsarea. John III. bishop of Rome, d. 573. John Philoponus, d. after 610.
560	565. Justin II. to 578. 570. Tiber II.	Joannes Scholasticus, bishop of Const. d. 578.
570		Benedict I. bishop of Rome, d. 578. Pelagius II. bishop of Rome, d. 590. Evagrius, the historian.
580	582. Mauritius.	Joannes Jejunator, bishop of Const. Leander, bishop of Hispalis. Gregory I. bishop of Rome, d. 604.

*Historical Events.*

460. Canon Paschalis of Victorius Aquilanus introduced into Rome in 465.—Leo allows penitents the privilege of private confession previous to their being received again into the church.—461. Council of Tours decrees that the bread be dipped in wine in the communion of the sick. Burial-places in churches, particularly in those of the martyrs, are considered as peculiarly holy.—469. The edict of 425 respecting the observance of Sunday made more strict.
470. Peter Fullo makes an addition to the Trisagion.—The North African church holds strictly to a particular form of prayer.—Parents sponsors for their own children.—Rogation days instituted at Vienna.
480. 489. Destruction of the theological school at Edessa.—The festival of Peter and Paul celebrated at Constantinople with new splendour.—Gelasius of Rome active in behalf of liturgies.
490. A special office instituted in Constantinople for enrolling the catechumens in the church books.—Council of Agde orders that on Palm-Sunday the catechumens shall publicly repeat the creed.—Consecration of altars.
500. Romish bishops bear, by way of eminence, the title of pope.—Church ordinance respecting lay communion.—The division of divine service into two parts begins gradually to disappear.—Legends respecting images of Christ not made with hands.—Celebration of Christmas-Eve.—Ordinance respecting the celebration of Rogation days in Gaul.
510. In the Gallic and Romish churches frequent participation of Christians in the heathen celebration of New Year.—Decree of the Council of Gironne respecting Rogations.—Easter-table of Dionysius Exiguus.—In the Gallic and Romish church the ecclesiastical year begins at Christmas.—517. In the West, prohibitions of the appointment of deaconesses repeated.
520. The Benedictines have the charge of the education of youth.—Hundred deacons in Constantinople.—524. Council of Valencia passes a decree in relation to the reading of the Gospels.—The *Te Deum* appears in the rule of the Benedictines.—527. The calculation of Dionysius respecting Easter adopted at Rome.—Great activity in building churches in the East, particularly in Constantinople.—529. In the West, a decree for the education of the clergy.—Church order in respect to the oversight of prisons by the bishops.—In Palestine, a combined celebration of the baptism and birth of Christ at Epiphany festival, continues.
530. Order in relation to the city church in Constantinople.—Rebuilding of the church of St. Sophia.—538. Laws for the celebration of Sunday passed at the Synod in Orleans.—Prohibition of marriage between baptized persons and their sponsors.
540. Order of the emperor respecting the installation of the clergy, and the evidence to be given by them of their agreement with the faith of the church.—Consecration of the sites of churches.—Canon of Victorius continues in Gaul.
550. Theological school at Nisibis flourishes.
560. Arch-subdeacons.—562. Dedication of the church of St. Sophia.—Institution of a three days' fast in the Gallic church for the time of the celebration of the festival of the calends.—Prohibition of abuses in the Festum Cathedræ Petri.—The council of Braga forbids tombs in the inner area of churches, and the use of the burial-service at the interment of suicides.
570. In the church of St. Sophia, a vault for the prince.—Council of Braga forbids the practice of dipping bread in wine at the supper.—A *festum circumcisionis* on the first day of January.—572. A law in the West concerning the visitation of the districts of the bishops.
580. 585. A church order respecting the care of widows and orphans.—The Council of Mascon enjoins the continuation of Easter festival to the *pascha clausum*.—The formula of distribution in the Romish church becomes longer.—A single immersion in baptism in the Spanish church.

<i>A. D.</i>	<i>Roman Emperors.</i>	<i>Bishops, Eccl. Officers, and Writers.</i>
590		Augustinus, in Britain. Cyriacus, bishop of Constantinople. Isidorus, bishop of Hispalis, d. 636. Sabinian, bishop of Rome, d. 606. Thomas, bishop of Constantinople.
610	Chlotar II. k. of France.	602. Phocas. 610. Heraclius. Boniface III. bishop of Rome, d. 607. Boniface IV. bishop of Rome, d. 615.
620		Sergius, bishop of Constantinople.
630		Deusdedit, bishop of Rome, d. 618. Boniface V. bishop of Rome, d. 625. Honorius I. bishop of Rome, d. 638. Sophronius, bishop of Jerusalem. Pyrrhus, bishop of Constantinople.
640	Constantine III. Heraclionas. Constans II.	Severinus, bishop of Rome, d. 640. John IV. bishop of Rome, d. 642. Theodore, bishop of Rome, d. 649. Martin I. bishop of Rome, d. 655. Eugenius I. bishop of Rome, d. 657.
650	655. Clovis II. 656. Chlotar III.	Vitalian I. bishop of Rome, d. 672. Thomas, bishop of Constantinople. John, bishop of Constantinople.
660		Theodore, bishop of Canterbury. Constantine, bishop of Constantinople.
670		Adeodatus, bishop of Rome, d. 676. Donus I. bishop of Rome, d. 678.
680	Pepin.	Agatho, bishop of Rome, d. 682. Leo II. bishop of Rome, d. 683.
690	685. Justinian II.	Benedict II. bishop of Rome, d. 685. John V. bishop of Rome, d. 686. Sonon, bishop of Rome, d. 687.
700	695. Leontius.	Sergius I. bishop of Rome, d. 701. The venerable Bede d. 735.

*Historical Events.*

580. The Council of Toledo requires the recitation of the creed in the liturgy of the supper.—The calculation of Easter according to Dionysius adopted in Spain.—The Romish quadragesima=36 days.
590. The Romish church active in missions.—Gregory allows to the Anglo-Saxons the celebration of festivals with banquets, and establishes the *litania septiformis*.—The Alexandrian calculation of Easter found in Gaul.—Contentions of Augustin with the ancient Britons about their reckoning of Easter.—Gregory I. improves the church singing, establishes a school for singers, gives a new form to the liturgy of the supper, is opposed to the worship of images, but not to their use in the churches.
600. The Roman Pantheon becomes a Christian church.—Continuation of the Easter-table of Dionysius Exiguus. Leander and Isidor active for the liturgy in the Spanish church.
610. Feast of All Saints in the Romish church.
620. Bells are found in the West.—*Festum apparitionis St. Michælis* in Rome.—Monks and clergy not permitted to become sponsors.
630. First appearance of the bishop's Baculus and Annulus.—Council of Toledo enjoins fasts on the day of Christ's death; prescribes concerning the consecration of wax candles for Easter.—Prescription of the Council of Toledo respecting church hymns.—The oriental church teachers seek to justify scientifically the worship of images.
640. Deaconesses continue in the oriental church.—Feast of the transfiguration of Christ in the oriental church.
650. 656. *Festum annuntiationis* on the 25th of March instituted in Toledo.—Remains of the old custom of the *προσφορα* in the supper in the Greek church.
670. Heathen customs mingle themselves in the festivals of the Virgin.—Unleavened bread commonly used in the supper.
690. 692. Council of Trullan forbids the reception of emoluments for the administration of the sacraments.—Council of Trullan against symbolical representations of Christ, and against crosses upon the floor of churches.—Council of Trullan requires the keeping of the sabbath as a fast; brings to remembrance the after-celebration of Easter; forbids the *missa præsanctificat* on the day of the annunciation to Mary; condemns the remains of the heathen celebration of the calends, and the customs of St. John's day; gives orders upon the spiritual relation between the baptized person and the sponsors; upon the *λειτουργία των προηγιασμένων*, and confirms the decision of 381 respecting heretics.

NOTE REFERRED TO ON PAGE 58.

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(FROM MEMOIRS OF HALDANE.)

I WAS dining, (said Dr. Buchanan,) some time ago, with a literary party, at old Mr. Abercromby's, of Trilibody, (the father of Sir Ralph Abercromby, who was slain in Egypt,) and we spent the evening together. A gentleman present put a question which puzzled the whole company. It was this: Supposing all the New Testaments in the world had been destroyed at the end of the third century, could their contents have been recovered from the writings of the three first centuries? The question was novel to all, and no one even hazarded a guess in answer to the inquiry.

About two months after this meeting, I received an invitation to breakfast with Lord Hailes (Sir David Dalrymple) next morning. He had been of the party. During breakfast he asked me if I recollected the curious question about the New Testament, from the writings of the three first centuries? "I remember it well, and have thought of it often, without being able to form any opinion or conjecture on the subject."

"Well, (said Lord Hailes,) that question quite accorded with the turn or taste of my antiquarian mind. On returning home, as I knew I had all the writers of those centuries, I began immediately to collect them, that I might set to work on the arduous task as soon as possible." Pointing to a table covered with papers, he said, "There have I been busy these two months, searching for chapters, half chapters, and sentences of the New Testament, and have marked down what I found, and where I have found it, so that any person may examine and see for himself. I have actually discovered the whole New Testament, except seven or eleven verses, (I forget which,) which satisfies me that I could discover them also. Now," said he, "here was a way in which God concealed, or hid, the treasures of his word, that Julian, the apostate emperor, and other enemies of Christ, who wished to extirpate the gospel from the world, never would have thought of; and though they had, they never could have effected their destruction."



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